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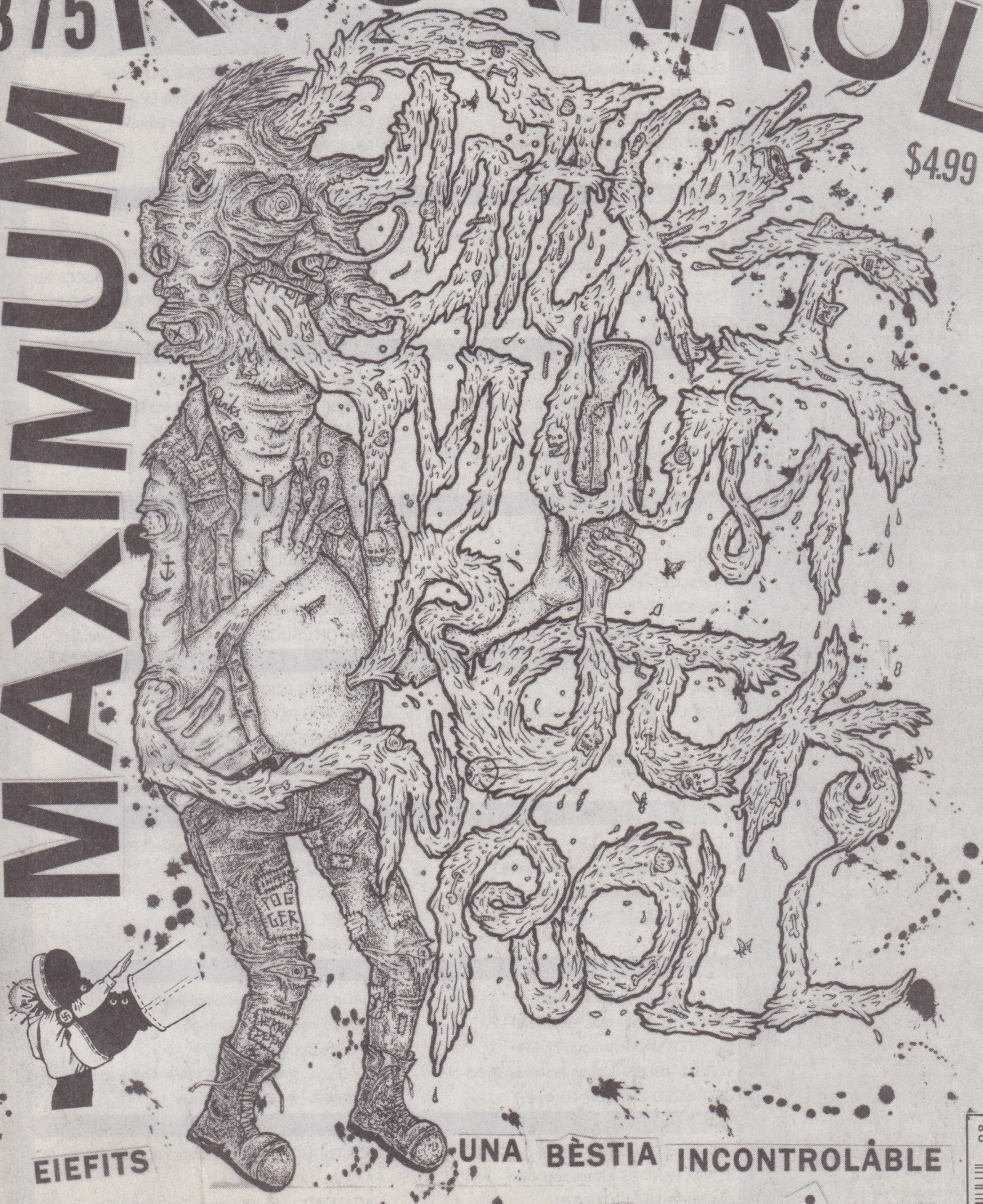

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For what it's worth, here're some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TOP 10

MATT BADENHOP (NEW TOP 10!)

- SLÖA KNIVAR/KNÆGT-split EP
- THE STASI-flexi
- FAILED STATES-demo
- S.O.R.-Sistem Oragnizirane Regresije-LP
- VALSE TRISTE-Sininen Hetki-EP
- MAAILMANLOPPU / KUUDES SILMÄ-EP
- NERVOUS SYSTEM-Slabor Life-EP
- EXTERNAL MENACE-Coalition Blues-LP
- RADIOACTIVITY-live
- POLISKITZO-live

WILL BLOMQUIST

- CHARLES DE GOAL-Algorythmes-LP
- THE DISHRAGS-Three-LP
- COLD INSTITUTION-EP / SCREAMING SNEAKERS-EP
- LOW LIFE-Dogging-LP
- REBARKER-12" / CRUEL FRIENDS-EP
- AUTUUS?/DARFÜR-split-EP
- MAAILMANLOPPU/KUUDES SILMÄ-split
- WHITEHORSE / SAVAGE REPUBLIC / FOSTER BODY-live
- RHYTHM OF CRUELTY/EXTINCTION OF MANKIND-live
- INTERNAL ROT / FORCED INTO FEMININITY-live

MITCH CARWELL

- NO BAILS-Epyx Shredder-LP
- TERRORISTS-Crazy Life/Crazy Life (live)-EP
- PINPRICK PUNISHMENT-A Tall Baby-EP
- SCREAMING SNEAKERS-Marching Orders-EP
- DIE RÖTZZ-LP / UNHOLY TWO-LP
- BLACK PANTIES-Mississippi-flexi
- AR-KAICS-Sick and Tired/Cut Me Down-45
- MORDECAI-Neil's Generation-LP
- HOBOCOP-Half Man Half Cop-10"
- WOUNDED LION-live

ROBERT COLLINS

- DASHER-EP / DEKODER-12"
- JARNEAD FERTILIZER/PURGE-split EP
- STERILIZED-EP / DISGUSTI-EP
- MISSIONARY-EP / NOMADS-EP
- LIFES/SHORT WALK-split EP
- SLÖA KNIVAR/KNÆGT-split EP
- GRMMSK/MÜLLTÜTE-split EP
- KOHTI TUHOA-EP / BAD PARTY-EP
- FEMACOFFIN-EP / SEX SCHEME-Thruster-cassette
- TRAITOR CRUCIFIX-demo / STRANGER-demo

JUSTIN DAVISSON (NEW TOP 10!)

- ZIG-ZAGS-LP
- UNHOLY TWO-Talk About Hardcore-LP
- ELEGY-live
- QUAALUDES-live + cassette
- BUTANNA-live
- THROWING ROCKS-live + cassette
- FUCK YOU PAY ME-LP
- NO BUNNY / CYCLOPS-live
- NIGHT BIRDS-Monster Surf-EP
- VERBAL ABUSE-Just an American Band-LP

LAYLA GIBBON

- LOW LIFE-Dogging-LP
- BIKINI KILL-Yeah Yeah Yeah Yeah-LP
- DIE KREUZEN-Cows and Beer-EP
- THE DISHRAGS-Three-LP
- FARANG-12"
- CHARLES DE GOAL-Algorythmes-LP
- ABORTICIDIO-EP
- THE STASI-flexi
- SCHOOL SHOOTINGS-EP?
- SCREAMING SNEAKERS-EP

DAN GOETZ

- DIE KREUZEN-Cows and Beer-EP
- BIKINI KILL-Yeah Yeah Yeah Yeah-LP
- BLOTTER-Under Armour '77-EP
- VERBAL ABUSE-Just an American Band-LP
- STERILIZED-Zero Sum Game-EP
- BLACK PANTIES-Mississippi-flexi
- PROXY-Fine Wine/Undone-45
- PITY-The Struggle-EP
- RÜZ-Drug Cult-flexi / MISSIONARY-American Strike-EP
- DEKODER-LP / THE STASI-flexi

GREG HARVESTER

- RÜZ-Drug Cult-flexi
- BLACK PANTIES-Mississippi-flexi
- GRMMSK/MÜLLTÜTE-EP
- FUTURE VIRGINS-Late Republic/Centre-45
- INSTITUTE-Demo-12"
- SICK THOUGHTS-I Got Hands/I'm Tired of You-45
- FARANG-12"
- VACATION CLUB-Heaven is Too High-LP
- HOBOCOP-Half Man Half Cop-10"
- LIFES/SHORT WALK-split EP

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

KENNY KAOS

- NO COAST-Don't Be a Gramps/Kick Out the...-45
- FRIENDS OF CESAR ROMERO-45
- PRIMA DONNA-Living in Sin/Rubbish-45
- AR-KAICS-Sick and Tired/Cut Me Down-45
- FUTURE VIRGINS-Late Republic/Centre-45
- LOS PEPES-Tonight-EP
- RIVALS-Future Rights/Flowers-45
- PNEUMONIACS-Still Lurkin'-10"
- EUREKA CALIFORNIA-Crunch-LP
- THE DISHRAGS-Three-LP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- LOS PEPES-Tonight-EP
- TERRORISTS-Crazy Life/Crazy Life (live)-EP
- V/A-Hamburger Saignant-LP
- AR-KAICS-Sick and Tired/Cut Me Down-45
- STALINS OF SOUND-Tank Tracks-LP
- SICK THOUGHTS-I Got Hands/I'm Tired of You-45
- HOBOCOP-Half Man Half Cop-10"
- DERBY DOLLS-Stinke Frau-EP
- THE DISHRAGS-Three-LP / CHARLES DE GOAL-LP
- WE ARE THE BEST-film

RAY LUJAN

- BANNER PILOT-Souvenir CD
- DEKOTER-Flowers to Blossom-LP
- EUREKA CALIFORNIA-Crunch-LP
- FUTURE VIRGINS-Late Republic/Centre-45
- LOS PEPES-Tonight-EP
- NIGHT BIRDS-Monster Surf-EP
- NO PROBLEM-Already Dead-LP
- SONGS FOR SNAKES-Year of the Snake-LP
- VACATION CLUB-Heaven is Too High-LP
- THE DAMNED-live / BUZZCOCKS-live / BIG EYES-live

LYDIA PHELPS

- LOW LIFE-Dogging-LP
- CHARLES DE GOAL-Algorythmes-LP
- DISGUSTI-EP
- SNØB-Exploit Me-EP
- BLOTTER-Under Armour '77-EP
- THE DISHRAGS-Three-LP
- RÜZ-Drug Cult-flexi
- PROXY-Fine Wine/Undone-45
- RIVALS-Future Rights/Flowers-45
- FLESH WORLD-live / WARSONG/GAG-live

FRED SCHRUNK

- SCREAMING SNEAKERS-EP
- CHARLES DE GOAL-Algorythmes-LP
- CROOKED BANGS/SECRET PROSTITUTES-split EP
- FUTURE VIRGINS-Late Republic/Centre-45
- BLACK PANTIES-flexi
- THE DISHRAGS-Three-LP
- LOW LIFE-Dogging-LP
- EUREKA CALIFORNIA-Crunch-LP
- DEKODER-LP
- PROXY-Fine Wine/Undone-45

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

- THE STASI-flexi
- BLOTTER-Under Armour '77-EP
- RÜZ-Drug Cult-flexi
- MISSIONARY-American Strike-EP
- SNØB-Exploit Me-EP
- BLACK PANTIES-Mississippi-flexi
- DISGUSTI-EP
- STERILIZED-Zero Sum Game-EP
- CROOKED BANGS/SECRET PROSTITUTES-split EP
- GOOSEBUMPS-Scared to See a Doctor-EP

DIANA VASHTI

- PRIESTS-live
- LIMP WRIST-live
- QUAALUDES-live
- FLESH WORLD-live
- LOW LIFE-Dogging-LP
- THE DISHRAGS-Three-LP
- BIKINI KILL-Yeah Yeah Yeah-LP
- EUREKA CALIFORNIA-Crunch-LP
- CHARLES DE GOAL-Algorythmes-LP
- DEKOTER-Flowers to Blossom-LP

ZINE TOP TEN

- *Mental Beat #1*
- *Even Noisy Sparrows*
- *Maximum Tremolo #2*
- *Punk in My Soup #1*
- *Stitches in my Head #6*
- *Toinen Vaihtoehto #249-250*
- *Distort #44*
- *Razorcake #80*
- *Something for Nothing #69*
- *The Student Insurgent Vol. 25 #3*

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#188/January '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#234/Novomber '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235 December '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war Scene Reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in IRaq," "Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/January '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, Artcore, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#239/April '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, Trust zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl, Vrah.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, Portland, Boston & Germany Scene Reports.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04. The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, Boss Martians, Reactionary 3, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, Al, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/Sept. '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, Baboon of Sickness zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjertestop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, Trust fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Pt 1, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (Avow zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Pt 2, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, We're Gonna Fight zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. MRR 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?, the Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/October '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/November '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#308/January '09. Punks & Film Special with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, and more.

#309/February '09. Ooga Boogas, Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr. California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/March '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens. Health Issue Special–Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#311/April '09. Print Media special with Erick Lyle (Scam zine), Shit-Fi, Z-Gun, Terminal Boredom, Tales Of Blarg, John Holmstrom (Punk magazine), History of skate zines, Punk flyer art, and a dozen one-page fanzines.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Pioggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

#313/June '09. Cult Ritual, Acid Reflux, NN, Herds, Hunx and His Punx, Grass Widow, Project Hopeless, Defect Defect, Tom's Midnight Garden, Existers and scene reports from Sydney and Boston.

#315/August '09. Zero Boys, Skin Like Iron, Punch, The Black and Whites, Insomnio, Resist, Blank Dogs, Etacarinae, Come On, London and Brest scene reports.

#316/September '09. Amebix, Born/Dead, Divisions, Meatlocker, Something Fierce, Mutating Meltdown, Altercado, Anal Warnead, Nick Toczec, Cowley Club, Albany Scene Report.

#318/November '09. Destino Final, Ratas Del Vaticano, Hex Dispensers, John Joseph/Cro-Mags, Explode Into Colors, Ratos De Porao, Stupids. Antidotum/Czosnek Tour Diary, Disco Assault. Fuera De Linea

#319/December '09. The Fix, Slices, Nodzzz, Brilliant Colors, Positive Noise, Gun Outfit, Pink Reason, Scrotum Poles, Gandhi's Cookbook, Goner Fest Photospread, Punk On Kuollut, Eläköön Hardcore: A Personal History of Finnish Hardcore

#322/March '10. MRR Review Staff's 2009 Top Tens, Japanese artist Sugi, Death, Dry-Roy, Druid Perfume, Kim Phuc, Defensa Absoluta

#323/April '10. The Spits, Face the Rail, Battletorn, Scatha, Dadfag, Attentat Sonore, Partibrejkers, Mob Rules, Last Pogo, John Paull Williams from Really Red, Chuck Warner.

#324/May '10. Bruce Roehrs memorial,, Kleenex/Liliput, Necro Hippies, Isterismo, RVIVR, Iceage, Tubers, Rot Shit, Beefeater, Cairo IL.

#325/June '10. X (Australia), Daylight Robbery, Ty Segall, Morne, Nü Sensaè, Pollution, Th' Inbred, Bad Sports, Wankys, Rakosi, Lotus Fucker

#326/July '10. U-ron from Really Red, Slang, Bunny Skulls, Trash Kit, Sedition, High Castle, Marcel Duchamp, Street Eaters, Circle Pit, Mehkago NT, Random Conflict, New Orleans and Calgary scene reports.

#327/August '10. Os Estudantes, The Curse, Pekinska Patka, Venereans, Thou, Italian Scene Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Cülo.

#328/Mocktober '10. Deathrats, The Conversions, Agnostic Front, Puffy Areolas, Super Wild Horses, Rape Revenge, Bernays Propaganda, New York and Czech Republic Scene Reports.

#330/November '10. Forgetters, Acephalix, Foreign Objects, Hank IV, Pheromoans, La La Vasquez, Credentials, Bukkake Boys, Negative Lifestyle, Tyranna, Katriina Etholen, Ireland Scene Report.

#333/February '11. The Welders, Touch & Go Fanzine, Rai Ko Ris, Dolly Mixture, Hitman, Straight Arrows, Eskapo Phillippines Tour Diary, Venezuela Scene Report, Olympia Scene Report.

#334/March '11. 2010 Year End Top Tens, A State of Mind, Useless Children, Straight Arrows, Sober Living for the Revolution, DC Scene Report.

#335/April '11. Siege, Crazy Spirit, 1981, Mauser, Devour, Icon Gallery, Sunshine SS, Timmy's Organism, Whitney House, Attention Span, Michigan Scene Report.

#336/May '11. Kriegshög, Steve Ignorant, Teargas, Tantrum, Hygeine, Shoppers, Chris Walter, Adrenalin OD, Spastic Panthers, Hungarian Scene Report.

#337/June '11. Destroy All Movies, John Morton/Electric Eels, White Fence, Ydinperhe, Nux Vomica, Vanya Bonecrusher, Black Feet, Uzi Rash, This is LA not L.A.: '80s Hardcore Flyers in New Orleans, Buffalo NY Scene Report.

#339/August '11. Head Cleaners, Midnite Snaxxx, Cocskar, Small Bones, Xcentric Noise records, Grown Ups, Youth Avoiders, Tomek Lipinski/Brygada Kryzys, Afternoon Gentlemen, Czech Punk History Part 2.

#340/September '11. Demokhratia, GG King, Ivan Brun, B-Lines, State POison, Jeremy Hush, Love Triangle, Deaf Club Oral History, Czech Punk History Part 3.

#341/October '11. Brian Walsby, Plates, Decraneo, Diet Cokeheads, Royal Headache, Ed Nasty & the Dopeds, Black Mamba Beat Tour of South Africa, Unfit Scum, Mongrel Zine.

#342/November '11. Kyushu Noisecore Summit, Brown Sugar, Vapid, No Rest, Brain Killer, Roach Motel, Brain F, IFB, Nekromantiker, Aires & Graces.

#343/December '11. Porkeria, Descarados, Peace or Annihilation, E.A.T.E.R., Poly Styrene, Severence Package, Katorga Works, Unwanted Christmas Presents, Resist Her Transistor.

#344/January '12. OBN IIIS, Social Chaos, Neo Cons, Alice Bag, Vaginors, Blookrow Butcher, Wartorn, Shitty Limits Last Show Report, Wretched, Zero Progress Tour Diary part 1, Means to an End Fest, Slick 46, Toughskins, No Gods No Matresses Zine.

#345/February '12. 2011 Year End Top Tens, Big Eyes, Terrible Feelings, Zero Progress Tour Report Part 2, the Unruled, Rapid Loss.

#346/March '12. Bärchen und die Milchbubies, Who Killed Spokey Jacket, Krömosom Tour of Japan, Globsters, Nigh Birds, Tribal War, Give Praise records, Refuse records.

#347/April '12. Ron Paul Special Issue, Carburetor Dung, Dark Times, Neon Piss, Kruel, Lapinpolthajat, Criminal Code, Slice Harvester Zine, Iron hand, Indigesti, Damnable Excite Zombies, Hawaii Scene Report.

#349/June '12. Omegas, Zyanose, Antisect, Negative Standards, No Statik, Your Pest Band, Eutanasia, Appalachian Terror Unit, Power Age, Inly Fumes and Corpses, Skizophrenia, David Ensminger, Greek Scene Report.

#350/July '12. The Photo Issue: Justine Demetrick, Ricky Adam, Jeanne Hansen, Don Pyre, Chis Boarts Larsen, Maria de Piedade Morais.

#351/August '12. 30th Anniversary Issue: MRR's Worst & Best, the Tim Yo Covers & Greentaping, Napalm Raid, God Equals Genocide, Stressors, American Sun, Ferocious X, Stripmines, Skitsystem, Juan y Diëgo, Banran.

#352/September '12: Stagnation, Luta Armada, Vaarallinen, Frozen Teens, Brain Slug, Noisecore Roundtable #2, Kohosh, Kvoteringen, Gritos de Resistencia, Alabaster Choad, Dipers, Murder in the Front Row, Support NYC.

#353/October '12. Brain Tumors, Effluxus, Anti Cimex, the Cravats, Unlearn, Warsong, Sick/Tired, To Live A Lie records, Stories from the Peruvian Underground Part 1, Bad Daddies, Imminent Destruction records with Lastly, Desperdicio, Against the Grain, Disturd.

#354/November '12. Replica, Ancient Filth, Synthetic ID, Maximo Volumen, O Inimigo, the Splits, Ohmwar, Beatrap, Victims Tour Diary Part 2, Girth records.

#357/February '13. Forward, Hounds of Hate, Contorture, Kicker, Nothing, Lunatic Fringe, Detonate records, Beatnik Termites, Detroit scene report.

#358/March '13. 2012 Year End Top Tens, Brontez Purnell, Potty Mouth, Nitad, Schizophazia, East Anglia scene report.

#359/April '13. Sickoids, Hassler. Divorce, Cancer Spreading, la Flingue. the Line. White Murder, the Paper Bags versus the Meat Sluts. Greenville, SC scene report.

#360/May '13. Stress, Proxy, the Kids, Kalte Lust, HIRS, Autonomy, Nuclear Frost, Dead Air Studio, Blood Orange Infoshop, Death Traitors, Elks Lodge Massacre Revisited.

#361/June '13. Organize and Arise, Fear of Extinction, The Rats Tour Diary, Kathleen Hanna, The Shorts, Hard Feelings, No Power, Melusaaste, We Got Power Zine Part I.

#362/July '13. Jeff Paul, Trust Zine, Shaved Women, Hondartzako Hondakinak, Kurraka, Born Wrong, Homicide, United Arab Emirates & Toronto, Canada scene reports, We Got Power Zine Part II.

#363/August '13. Las Otras, Toinen Vaihtoehto zine, Sudor, Terveet Kädet, Black & White, Stillsuit, Taquila Mockingbird, Arturo Vega, Ruined Families, Baitline!!! zine, R.O.T.T.E.R., No Mistake, Siren Songs, Yorba Linda, CA scene report.

#364/September '13. Last Chaos, Snob Value, NE! Records, RAD, Asile, Whatever Brains, The New Flesh, Trashies, Forgotten Generation, Nightfall/Population Zero, Texas Filth Scene Report.

#365/Ocotber '13. Condition Tour Diary, Zudas Krust, Doomed Society Radio, Kontrasekt, Bib Black Cloud, Hero Dishonest, Violent Party, Helvetin Viemärit, Malcolm, Clearview Records, Brno, CZ Scene Report.

#366/November '13. Chaos Destroy, Permanent Ruin, Thisclose, Halsey Swain, Rosa Apatrida, No More Fiction, Rajäyttäjät, Nudes, Tarantuja, Destruye y Huye, Vertical House Records, Punk Photo Roadtrip.

#367/December '13. The Mob, Creem, Gag, generacion Suicida, Good Throb, Force Fed Drugs, Total Trash, Life Chain, Concrete Worms, War//Plague, Julia Ostertag, Bad American.

#368/January '14. Queer Issue with Anti-Corpos, Shopping, Glory Hole, Porcelain, Strong Boys, Ejaculoid, Closet Burner, Peeple Watchin', Samuel Shanahoy, Dures et Gays, Priests, Groke, Screaming Queens tour diary, Queer Zine Fest London, International Queer Scene Report.

#369/February '14. Dezerter, Arctic Flowers, Stoic Violence, Strange Factory, Gobierno Militar, Poliskitzo, Voight-Kampff, Rat/Xerox, Nü-kle-er Blast Suntan.

#370/March '14. Year End Top Tens, Nervosas, Komplikations, Mallwalkers, New Orleans punk documentary Almost Ready.

#371/April '14. Bill Bondsmen, Crapoulet Records, O! Kult, Rational Animals, Stab, Woolf, Varix, New York's Alright Fet, Miami Scene Report.

#372/May '14. EU's Arse, Siege, XAXAXA, Razorcake, Wymyns Prysyn, Alert! Alert!, Space Wolves, Rhythm of Cruelty, Straight Crimes, PMMA, Strange Attractor, Revenge of the Psychotronic Man, Scotland Scene Report.

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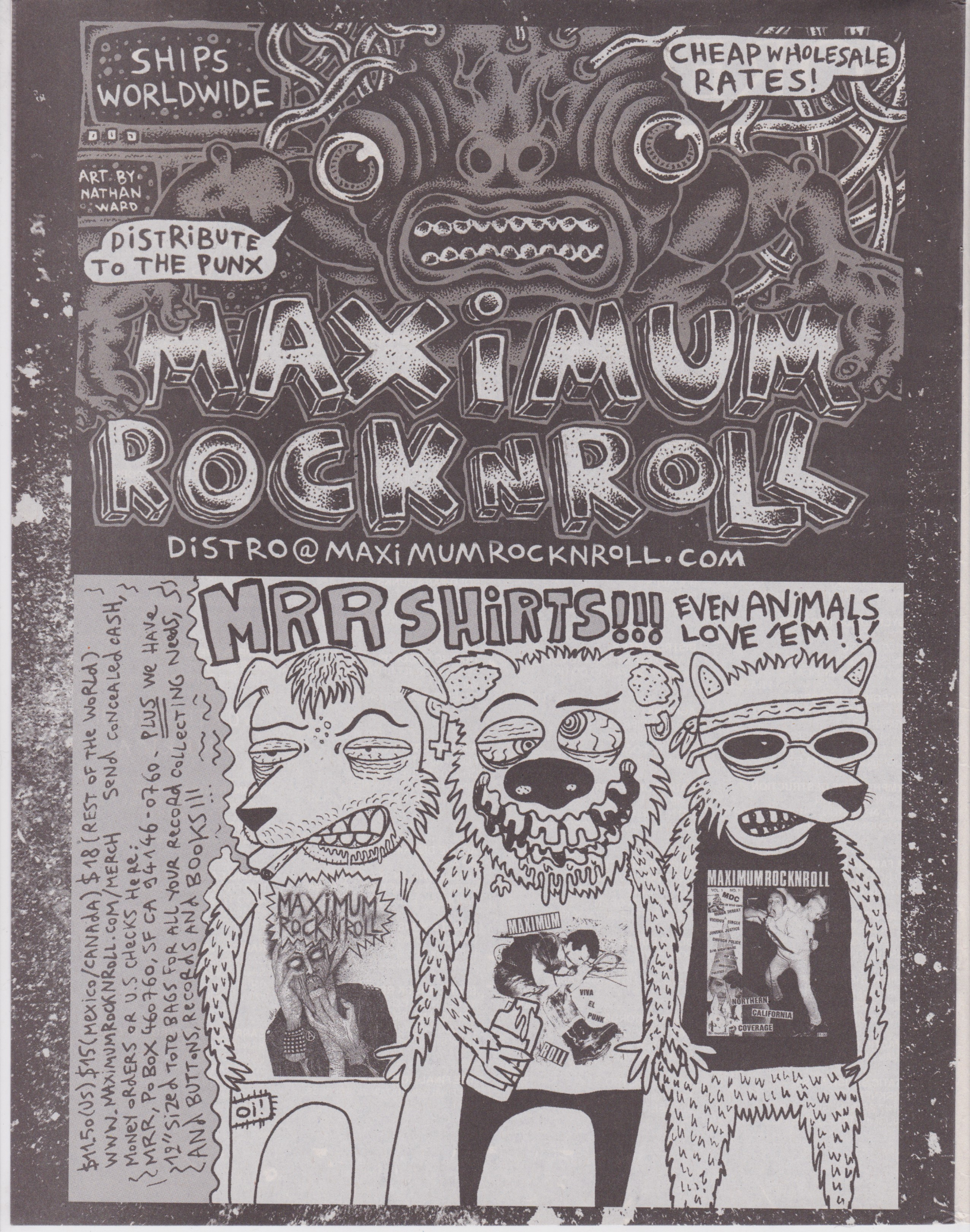
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LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Hey MRR—
I noticed you forgot to include the tour dates I sent you for the Quaaludes interview in issue #374 so here they are again. And if any of you punks live near the cities that they're touring in, go check 'em out cuz they rule!
—Vanessa X
August 2nd – Los Angeles, CA
August 3rd – San Diego, CA
August 4th – Tucson, AZ
August 5th – Flagstaff, AZ
August 7th – Salt Lake City, UT
August 8th – Boise, ID
August 9th, – Tacoma, WA
August 10th – Vancouver, CAN
August 12th – Seattle, WA
August 13th – Olympia, WA
August 14th and 15th – Portland, OR
August 16th – San Francisco, CA

Hi there—
I'm seeking submissions for me zine *Neurotica*, and this kinda sums it up...

What is *Neurotica*? It's more than projection of what lurks in the murky, sticky, subterranean bowels of a neurotic nerd punks mind. It's a love letter to the obtusely obscure. That which can't be pigeonholed in the claustrophobic confines of genre. Willfully deranged, fishbulb filled with LSD for a cranium.

Celebration of punk rock (created by the Sonics / MC5 / the Troggs / the Seeds) *Neurotica* is to show you that the average anti-hero can and will be a rockstar, you will be god. You will be Elvis. You will be you and *Neurotica* is about you...

EC comics, *Mad* Magazine, *PUNK* magazine hidden in the textbook, sitting in the back row at math class, Lucky Strike soft pack rolled up in shirt sleeve, greasy mop top.. *Neurotica* is about tearing walls, breaking bridges. So what if you wear a leather jacket and have a mohawk that makes it hard to walk through doors and you might just happen to like the Shangri-Las. *Neurotica* is about breaking the so-called "rules of punk" and reminding readers what is, or was meant to be when the Ramones first shouted out that 1-2-3-4 count off.
Individualism. Freedom.
—Ryan Uellendahl
fixme516@gmail.com

Hi MRR *(especially Langford)!*—
I hope this letter finds you all well. My name is Pat Blocher, I'm an artist living in Southern CA.

This is a continuation of an ongoing work titled "The Records Project." The project consists of making photograms (a form of camera-less photography) of records and sending them to the bands and the person(s) who introduced me to the music.

I first heard Vånna Inget on *MRR* Radio #1289 during Langford's "Foreign, (at least) Female Fronted, Thematic Failure" set. Such a great band!

As a thank you for the continuing hard work and dedication of the *MRR* staff, I would like to give you (*MRR*) a photogram on the Ingen Botten LP. Prints have been sent to the band and one has been kept for my archives.
Up the Punx!
—Pat Blocher

Dear MRR—
Following one if the few protocols that *MRR* uses, which I dearly respect, I am writing a letter to express a particular concern that came up because of an interview running in this issue. Cool Death Records. To contextualize this, I helped to proof and edit this interview.

Please understand that my issue *is not with the label itself*, my issue is with the band Gutter Gods. Come to think of it, I believe that one of the dudes that runs Cool Death is in Gutter Gods, so interpret that as you will. So thank you to Cool Death for reminding me that I have some questions...

Being part of worldwide punk, I have read numerous zines (among them *Groin Gravy* and *Soapbox*) and interviews with a member of Gutter Gods, Meatdog, just as much as I have read interviews with others who live a comfortable life and consider themselves "sensational." Since we are a punk community, or as others who presume to be part of the community via "internet trolling *sans balls*," I take issue with the reluctance and/or avoidance of Gutter Gods to answer some simple questions about Meatdog's White Power affiliation. I do not want to necessarily point to the label who submitted this interview—I gotshu, you just wanna put out what you like and sell the shit. Nor do I wish to overshadow any future bands involved with this label. Also, has anyone ever really asked? *Really?* Yet I understand that perhaps Meatdog's, otherwise known by his Christian name Allan Cowie's band mates did not alert him to the questions that followed the Cool Death submission regarding Gutter Gods. Within that scenario, I would love a dialog. Additionally, I realize that Meatdog doesn't seem to be much of a "dialog" sorta dude, finds it acceptable to wear "track pants" in public and skirts WP lines. He is either a really smart person or a really dumb one, which is what makes him interesting—but what happens when someone who can out punk, out fuck and definitely out dress Meatdog asks these questions? Someone that doesn't hate him or like him? I realize that some punks don't want to bother with his infantile diaper rash whining, "It's just about the music, mayun," as the conversation must have gone down with the band regarding these particular questions, claiming that *MRR* was trying to be controversial, but isn't that what your bandmate does? Aren't you in a band with him? What if they/he were here or anywhere the hell else, what would happen? I suppose it's a *Through the Looking Glass* scenario 'casue I sure as hell can't afford to go to Australia, but still...

Meatdog could probably kick the shit outta me, I am aware, but given a bat, my intelligence and maybe some raw meat, I am willing to go head to head. Will his WP buddies defend him? Because the punks don't, they just cry "free-speech" without contextualizing anything, running to the corner and wetting their pants afraid to debate all the provocative shit they support or create (weak). You want controversy, don'tcha? We can talk hypothetically all day, if Meatdog were dropped on the "wrong side of town," that means most places besides Australia and parts of Europe, would he stand up? But here we are, livin' in the now...

Cool Death, the punk world is curious about your label, we want to know about some badass records you put out, you are making things happen in your scene. All in all though, this shit is weak.

Meatdog, I understand, you have probably never known the sensual touch of a brown lady, can't help you there, but I pity you. You want some advice on what track pants to wear with your running shoes? I understand and can help you there. At this moment, I have a million questions for you about all sorts of things you have said and done and if I don't ask now, you will most definitely fall off my radar again, but here is a simple one: Are you White Power or not?
One Love,
—Mariam
mariam@maximumrocknroll.com

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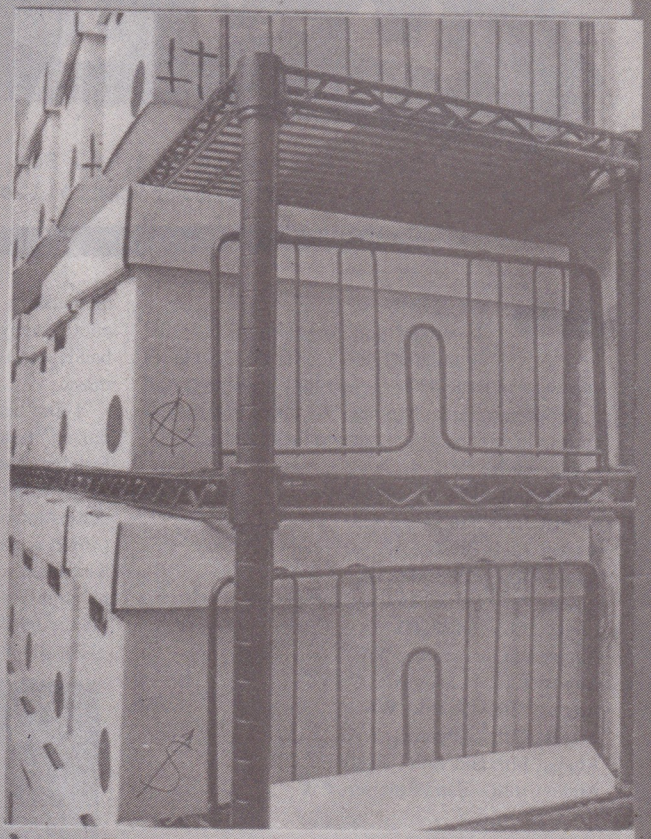

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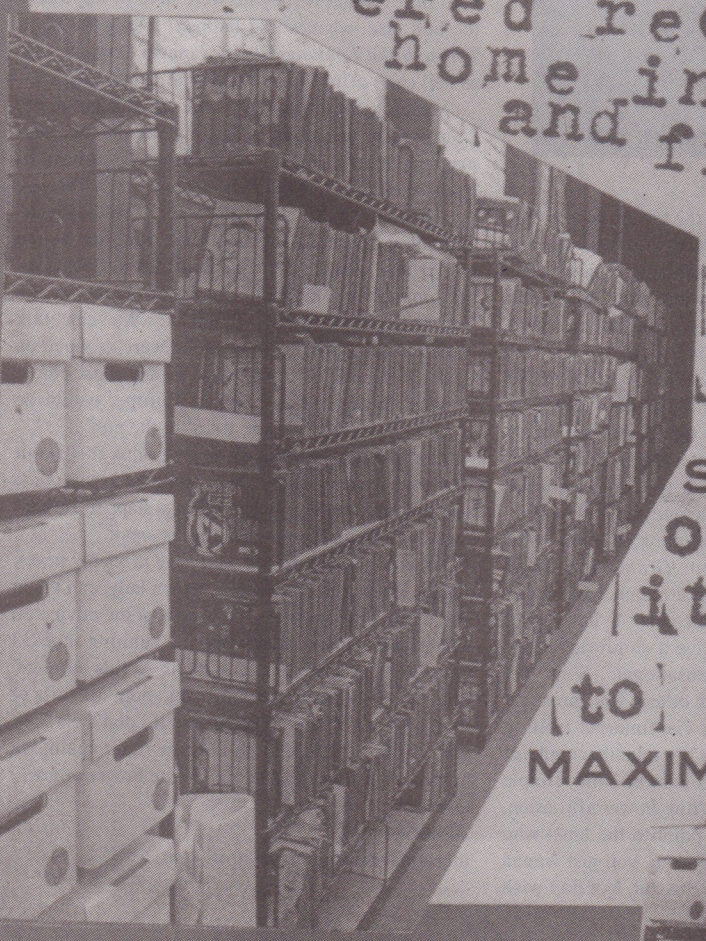

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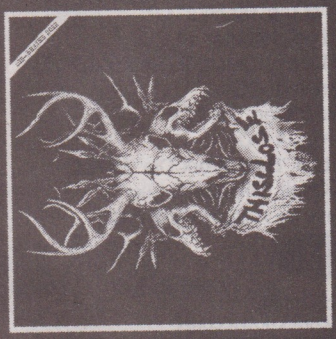

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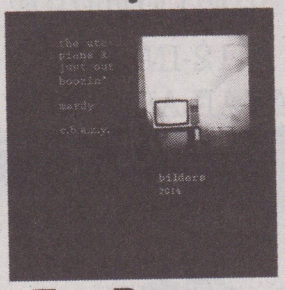

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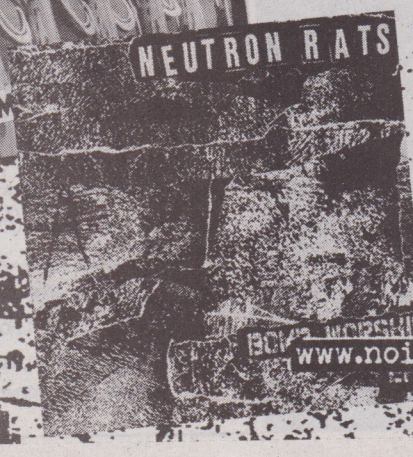

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COLUMNS

Ladies and Gentlemen: get up off of your duffs, finish your drinks in a single swig and get ready to pogo til' you fuckin' puke, because the punx own this column this month and the beer is flowing a freely as the barre chords.

Kicking off the month is the summer's greatest novelty, the SAD BOYS/WHO KILLED SPIKY JACKET? Split postcard. I know these appeared in distros worldwide as if they were records, but I am extremely glad that I ordered mine from Total Fucker Records, who drew me a nice doodle on the back, slapped on a stamp and put the fucker in the mail the way it was supposed to be handled. *Mirabile visu*, it still played perfectly when it arrived at column HQ! SAD BOYS kick off the split with "Black Out," as exemplary an example of their catchy NYC pogo attack as they've penned, with an infectious guitar hook and a clever stop-start finish. As miserable as a raging case of gonorrhea and as fun as the night you caught it. WKSJ?'s "Beer Stormtrooper" is a swaggering UK82 number that suffers a bit from being too short (I feel like that fade-out must be a concession to the limitations of the medium) but is otherwise aces as always. Perhaps a fuller version will appear on a later release? (Total Fucker Records, PO Box 82, Somerville MA 02143)

In preparation for their stunning Japan tour (oh, those line-ups at the gigs! Some of them are just mouth-watering), SAD BOYS have also graced us with a three-way split with tour mates RAW DISTRACTIONS and STAGNATION. The five (!) SAD BOYS songs on their side have a decidedly sunnier, less noizy production quality than their earlier efforts, which gives them a slightly goofy pop-punk feel that isn't exactly optimal in my mind but is hilarious at the same time. Fear not, SAD BOYS are as miserable as always here, joining these cheerier sounds to their usual lyrical grime and misery. The standouts here are "Yuck" with its eminently sing-along-able chorus and "Why Are You Doing That?", a slightly slower than usual stagger-er with martial drum rolls that could pass for an outtake from the *40 Oz. Casualty* sessions. STAGNATION seem to have been getting more experimental and progressive with every release, and this new track is no exception. It's a pounding, nearly industrial effort that floats by on a cloud of pure noize, rooted in a pounding bass/drums riff, with guitars providing noize alone and heavily reverb-ed vocals shouting cryptic phrases. Dark, compelling shit from a band that's only getting more unhinged. RAW DISTRACTIONS bring things back down to Earth with a track that's easily the equal of anything on the recent *Raw Fight* EP, a driving Sweden-by-way-of-UK82 ripper with a quick but deadly catchy guitar lead that's over in a flash. (Hardcore Survives, hardcore-survives.com)

Pogo-ing up out of the depths of history (that's right, don't stop the pogo yet!) comes the reissue of the DISCOCKS *Fast's Discocks* 1991 demo. This early iteration of the band featured (of course) head DISCOCK Peter on bass and vocal alongside the guitar/vocals of Nori (later to found TOM AND BOOT BOYS) and drummer Eiji who would go on to DSB. What a fucking lineup! Of course, this is 100% dumbshit Oi punk of the most rudimentary kind. I can't imagine a more stupid record. It is, of course, amazing. These fuckers were struggling to come up with one riff a song ("Oi! Power" ended up only getting half of one) and spend most of their very limited lyrical prowess lusting after Dr. Martin's products, getting fucked up and…that's kind of it. The entire printed lyric to "Let's Go!" for example is the following: "Let's Go Right Now x4/ On the Street Oi! Oi! Oi!/Fucked up in the city", because Peter has forgotten the rest of the words. The recording in thin, the songs are fucking terrible, it has no redeeming social or political message and I couldn't be happier this record exists. Being a boring old fart I don't really have the boys by the house for a boozer any more these days, but if I did you can be damn sure this is the first record I'd throw on when the beer ran dry and the whisky was coming out. (Pogo 77 Records, Zushimachi 2951-15, Machida-Shi, Tokyo 194-0203)

A sharper and more immaculately presented band than the aforementioned, BLACK AND WHITE dropped a two-song cassette single in honor of their disastrously badly-promoted US tour (which is a story for another day but the short version: dear aspiring tour promoters and gig bookers, fucking Facebook posts alone are not sufficient to promote shows) which is easily as good as their earlier vinyl single. "You Make Me Sick" is a giddy pure punk song with a mannered almost mod-ish vibe, perhaps the JAM meets STAR CLUB? "No Realities" could be a lost BUZZCOCKS B-side, with one of the best two-bar solos I've heard this year. Hopefully somebody got to see these guys when they were here (can you tell I'm pissed that I missed their Oakland gig?), but at least those of us who didn't have the balm of an excellent couple of tracks to kill the pain. (Beastly Cad Records)

I feel like INEPSY might be one of those "you had to be there" bands, because I don't hear a lot of talk about them, but whether they were rampaging through the US on tour or releasing the finest motörpunk records ever crafted, they fucking ruled the early '00s and I fucking loved 'em. Needless to say, the news that there was a lost track from the first LP sessions making an appearance in 2014 I was totally on board. Thus I was quick to pick up the "Anti-System" flexi offering from the Metal Punk Death Squad crew. It's pretty apparent why this particular song didn't make the cut for the record, but that's hardly a knock on it as every track that made it on to *See You in Hell* is nigh perfect. "Anti-System" is a bit more hardcore than the usual INEPSY fare, forgoing guitar hooks for a more DISCHARGE feel, complete with a couple of bass-driven breaks that would fit nicely on *Hear Nothing*…. Obviously this isn't the

place to start with the INEPSY discography, but if you're reading this column you should definitely have the aforementioned *See You in Hell* LP and the *Nuclear Nightmare* EP as well, and this is an excellent supplement to those. (Metal Punk Death Squad)

Finally, one more out of the vaults as the always excellent Malaysian label Black Konflik have dug up and reissued a selection of demo cuts from Tokyo hardcore punks DEFIANT. DEFIANT never made it beyond opening band/demo status, but don't let that fact lead you to believe that they weren't a quality band. Driven by acrobatic bass-playing, fleet solos and familiarly epic Japanese hardcore riffing, DEFIANT more than hold their own against the legends of Tokyo hardcore. Their metallic, slightly funky edge recalls MANBIKI CHOCOLATE (another band dragged from obscurity by a recent reissue) or a less tough ORIGIN OF M, while the sing/spoken vocals (and big headband on the vocalist) are very AI. "Medium Approach" and "Shoki Gekido" are the standouts to me, but there's nothing here that isn't worth hearing. (Black Konflick, PO Box 28, 27600 Raub, Pahang Malaysia)

Next month: one of the best fucking records from a band I've never heard of I've ever had the pleasure of slapping on my turntable. Plus a bunch of other stuff, that's probably not as good TBD. Thanks for reading! Hit me up at agunderwood@gmail.com, or c/o *MRR* with hate mail, demos and irresponsible parenting advice.

This MULTIPLE MAN interview is continued on from the last column covering (just scratching the surface from an outsiders perspective) the last few years of synth punk in Australia, and Melbourne label Nihilistic Orbs in particular. In summary and to help this column make more sense, the first part began with the death of Shaun South in early 2013. Shaun ran Nihilistic Orbs and fronted synth band CHROME DOME after moving to Melbourne in 2008, as well as a stint of booking shows and outdoor DIY festivals for noise, shoe-gaze, punk and synth-beat bands at the time. The cross-over scene of synth in punk is discussed with Australian bands influenced by contemporary US dark punk wave, such as MASSES and NERVOUS TREND. Multiple Man was interviewed as a band from Brisbane and thus outside the Melbourne Nihilistic Orbs scene, doing a similar sound but intertwined with punk values from being active members of the scene before (and still during) this project.

As well as seeing bands doing a constantly similar style of music and not wanting to be like that yourselves, are there any bands that also inspire you by constantly changing?

S: While CHROME DOME was definitely a modern influence, so was the band SOFT MOON, but those are the only two modern influences. They're from San Francisco.

C: Noisy new wave.

S: For us, modern influences are outside of the question, outside of those two. We played a new song for the first time last night that was very very Chrome Dome. But that's only because they were a real big influence. I met Bryce (Chrome Dome drummer) through hardcore, and then when he came to Brisbane with Chrome Dome he was like "Come check this out" and I watched it. In high school I wore a DEPECHE MODE T-shirt, but I kind of alienated myself away from that because punk is so all-inclusive...and then to turn up to a crust venue, Burst City, and watch Chrome Dome play—that blew my mind. I was like "So punks can do this (listen to music outside restrictions of typical punk) and this is fine?"

What band did you play in before Multiple Man?

S: WARCHILDREN. I sung; I've always been the singer. I've been in high school punk bands and stuff like that but WARCHILDREN was the first serious punk band I've been in. I learned the instrument to play in Multiple Man basically, and eventually I got a big tax return and bought a synth that SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES used to use and DEPECHE MODE played it. It's a powerful sounding synth, it's got really creepy bass pitches.

With your sound evolving, besides all the points you brought us as to why (ie. Not wanting to stagnate) is it musical influences changing that change your sound as well?

S: Yes, 1000%.

So it started with Chrome Dome. What along the way has influenced you guys?

S: Well the reason we started the band, we were both Chrome Dome fans, I was playing in hardcore bands, Chris was playing in synth and psychedelic bands, one day I came over and I played Chris "Nag Nag Nag" by CABARET VOLAIRE. And we were just like "This is *the* song". We looked into the wider Sheffield scene (UK) and the other turning point was "Being Boiled" by the HUMAN LEAGUE. Before they got the two girls, they were the biggest experimental band in the world. DAVID BOWIE would get denied entrance to their concerts because he wasn't at the list and the show was at capacity. They were *the* cool band and "Being Boiled" is the perfect encapsulation of a band that likes KRAFTWERK and wanted to apply it to a pop sensibility, so it's avant garde applied to pop. That and "Nag Nag Nag" which was a pure expression of punk. We've always worked in the context of bedroom recording. We've only ever been into studios to mix. And these bands had tens of thousands of dollars to record perfect sounding albums. We get the tag of "synth punk" because what we're doing is synth music in punk recording ideals. One take for vocals, we don't even have a four track.

Did Major Crimes put out both the tapes?

S: He did the first tape, I did the second tape just as a release by the band. But Ben (Major Crimes) did the first 7". He was the first person to get us and still does. He has always been a god send.

How did Ben, all the way in Adelaide, get onto you guys in Brisbane?

S: Me and Sam McKenzie booked a show for Rule of Thirds and we played together.

Do you feel like you have to tour every time you put out a new release, seeing as you put out releases quite frequently?

S: Yeah absolutely. We love it.

C: I love Melbourne, I love Sydney, I love Adelaide!

S: Brisbane is such a microcosm; you will see the same people everyday and because we're still an anomaly after three years of being a band, no one knows where to put us. We've toured more than any band in Brisbane but we still get other bands contacting us like "Can you guys open?" on a garage rock show. In other states we have 50-100 people turn up. In Brisbane, it's our friends laughing at us. We play shows in other states because it's easy for us to do. I want to say cheap but Chris paid $300 to get here yesterday.

C: I missed my check-in by four minutes.

You have more than a couple of releases under your belt, the 12" is coming out on an overseas label and No Patience Records in Australia, does that give you incentive to step it up and tour internationally?

S: We'd love to if we had the money.

C: If I missed that flight, I'm fucked.

S: We're both full time Uni students, we tour on the weekend.

END I/V

Unlike Nihilistic Orbs who is specific to the style of music, No Patience has been a key label (with others just being one-off releases of the style) in putting out bands of similar sound that don't fall into the scene of the former. This includes RULE OF

THIRDS and OCCULTS s/t 7"s in 2013, the bands complimenting each other in similar styles but Rule of Thirds being cleaner and eerier while Occults, dark and fuzzy. Also recently out has been the LAKES and TAX self-titled EPs and Lakes *Blood On the Grove* 12". But before any of these, this fast expanding Adelaide punk label first released the self-titled EP of Chrome Dome before Nihilistic Orbs itself began.

I was at a Black Goat Warehouse show a few weeks ago when I was approached by Bryce, the drummer of the forced-defunct band. I didn't see him often at shows and even now he was only passing through to sell off copies of a cassette tape he had put out. It was a live Chrome Dome tape from one of their sets back in the days Shaun used to put on nights at The Empress. Modulate Melbourne MM-01. Even after his passing there was still a ripple off of Chrome Dome and a sound and time people wanted to remember. I guess saying "Never forget" sounds a bit cliché and cheesy but looking back it seems like such a grass-roots time in Melbourne and Australia for a new wave of synth punk that has fuelled and bred an Australian sound of it's own.

It's the first day of winter in Australia and the weather is miserable in Melbourne. THEE NODES have just finished their Australian tour, supported by Melbourne's GENTLEMEN driving up the east coast through Adelaide, Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney and Brisbane. They were the last international band to come here of a constant flow from the last few months. We're far away, you probably won't make your money back coming here but we still do alright. As well as all the bands mentioned in the last two columns that made this article on synth punk, I drove around with Thee Nodes for a bit and also recommend checking out or keeping an ear on these new Australian bands that supported them throughout the tour: HYGIENE, crossover hardcore powerviolence from Canberra. UNPEOPLE, raw boston hardcore punk from Brisbane. Also WOODBOOT from Brisbane, Aussie 77 sounding punk. Cheers for now.

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So, I'm in the bathroom, washing my face, and brushing my teeth for probably the tenth time that day. Then my nose picks up that scent. That sweet scent. That sickeningly sweet scent. The smell of death. I almost puke.

"Nick," I yell to my stepfather, "I think another rat died in the wall or under the tub."

"Good," he yells back, "I got the little bastards."

I quickly finish what I'm doing in the bathroom, take a quick look at my parents' electric toothbrush, wonder how it would feel *down there*, then exit. The stench is too much.

***

Back when I lived with my mom and Nick on West Fourth Street we always had rat problems.

From day one.

Our apartment was on the ground floor. By ground floor I mean, well, basement. You actually had to walk down stairs from the street to enter our place. My mom and Nick had gotten the place back in the early '70s, and the rent stayed cheap there until some fucking rich yuppie guy purchased it, and made the whole building into one townhouse. I hope he had rat problems too.

Anyway, from the first day I lived on West Fourth Street I heard the rats. I'd hear them in the walls making scratching sounds. I'd hear them underneath the bathtub squealing and fighting with each other. I'd hear them talking to me in my sleep, telling me to kill couples in cars parked up in the Bronx. But I didn't listen to them. They were rats. Stealing ideas from dogs. What did they know?

They knew Nick hated them—a lot. Every week it would become a ritual with Nick. He'd go out and buy heavy duty rat poison, and then make me help him move the oven. Then he'd put those little blue pellets in the holes the rats clawed open, and say, "Die you little fucking shits." Then he'd make me help him move the oven back into place. Most of the time, though, I'd just stand there in my leather jacket with the US pins and big ass sneakers cause I'm from New York, and watch him move it, saying, "a little more to the left, Nick, yeah, that's it." Nick would always look at me with sweat on his face and that look that said, "Fuck you, George." Man, I love that guy.

The rats seemed to multiply exponentially as the years went by. The squealing got louder and louder, as did the holes behind the oven. First the holes were the size of pennies, then dimes, then quarters. Finally they were like almost a half a foot tall. It was then that we knew that we were faced with more problems than loud noises and the smell of death.

***

One night my now ex-girlfriend Wendy, who was living with me and my parents in our tiny apartment at the time, went into the kitchen in the middle of the night to cook us a frozen burrito. When she turned on the light she claims she saw a rat the size of a small dog.

A big small dog.

She says she just stared at it, and it stared back at her. She claims they had a Mexican stand-off, and finally the rat won because she ran away into the bathroom.

When she came back into my room to tell me this I kind of half-believed her. I told her that maybe she saw a mouse, that sometimes mice got into the house, but there was no way a rat had broken into the house. She told me it had a big long tail, and red eyes. I hugged her, told her not to worry, that we'd take care of "that big ol' rat," and to go to sleep. On the mattress. On the floor. See, I only had a bed that could fit one person, so one of us had to sleep on the floor. And I let her sleep there. I'm that kinda guy.

"But the big rat will come in and bite me," she said, with a look of real panic in her eyes.

"It won't," I said, rubbing her shoulders, "I promise. Besides, it can't get in under my door, anyway."

I had seen mice in my room a few times, usually they had come in through the fireplace, but I couldn't imagine a rat. And I figured, if she had seen a mouse and it came in the room it probably wouldn't bother her anyway. And I doubted it could hop up on the bed and get me. Which was the important thing.

Wendy and I told both Nick and my mom about the *rat* that had entered the house the following day. My mom looked terrified, and Nick looked, well, like he doubted the whole thing. I remember him whispering to me, "probably a mouse, huh?" I just nodded my head.

***

About a week or so went by, and Nick put some poison behind the oven and under the bathtub just to shut the rats up—and the women. At least one rat must have died, cause that smell hit my nose again, and lasted for about four or five days.

One night while Wendy was sleeping on the floor I ventured into the kitchen to get something to eat. I think it was peas. Or grape-nuts. I can't remember which. It didn't matter, anyway, because once I turned on the light I saw IT.

IT was standing there, in the middle of the kitchen, looking at me, right in the eyes, and IT was huge. Fuck small dogs, this thing was like a Great Dane. Well, actually, a beagle, but the kitchen was so small it looked like a Great Dane. And IT had a

long ass tail, and Satan-red eyes. And IT just stared at me, and I just stared back at IT. With my Pajamas with the paisleys on them. And my barefeet. And I knew that if IT wanted to IT could lunge at my neck and kill me. So I just stared at it.

And IT stared at me. This went on for what seemed like hours, but was probably only about a minute or so. Finally, I kinda just backed out slowly, hit the light off, ran into my room, and jumped over Wendy and onto my bed.

"Didja get something to eat?" asked Wendy, half asleep on the floor.

"Um, no, um, go back to sleep," I said to her.

She nodded her cute head, and closed her eyes. I hoped like hell the rat wouldn't decide to visit us that night.

***

The next day I told Nick about the Great Dane in the kitchen. He looked at me, and then asked me if I was seeing mice like Wendy. I told him there really was a huge rat, and it could have killed me. He made size jokes about penises, and I told him it wasn't funny. That this rat could kill us. My mom overheard the conversation and got all worried. Nick calmed her down and gave me a nasty look. He then went to the hardware store and got super-professional rat poison.

***

About a week later, I heard a screaming noise under the kitchen sink, and lots of things clanking around. When I opened the cabinet door, I saw a flash of the giant rat's teeth, and then it was gone. And all the cleaning fluids were knocked over, and the garbage had been gnawed upon. I told Nick, and we decided to put glue traps under there.

The next day, Nick and I hear loud noises under the sink, and figure we caught IT. We open the doors and find lots of rat hair on the glue trap. Lots. We figure we could peel it off, and sell it to Sy Sperling or something.

The next day Nick gets one of those heavy duty, super-duper rat traps. The kind that looks like a mouse trap, only twenty times the size. We figure it should break the fuckers neck, and then the house wouldn't be full of terrorized women anymore. But we both knew who was really terrified.

The next night we hear a loud snapping noise, followed by a squeal. We slam open the cabinet doors, and see the trap upside down, with no rat. But there is a bit of blood on the trap. It got away.

The next week passes as Nick sets poison on trays under the sink every night. And every morning we open the doors to find the poison gone, as well as some of the garbage. This fucker could eat a lot of crap. Kinda like my bass player of Furious George, Evan.

One night I venture into the kitchen to get some milk and grape-nuts. I wore my sneakers in case IT was there, and IT was when I turned on the light. Standing, unmoving, and with a big belly. I said, "Hello," and "punk rock," and "Have a nice evening." I then turned off the lights, and went to bed. Shaking.

***

The next day Nick and I came up with a plan. We even drew our plan on paper, and mapped the whole thing out. We figured the glue traps didn't work. We figured the super-size mouse traps didn't work, and we figured the poison didn't work. But what about all three, at once? That was our plan. But we'd have to lay it out so that there were no mistakes, and no escape. If we missed him this time, we knew IT would figure out it was a trap, and avoid it.

First we set up the super-size mouse trap. Next to that the glue-trap. And next to that the poison, served on a nice tray. We figured the rat would like start eating the poison, then kinda shift his body, get caught on the glue-trap, and than get his tail snapped and caught on the large mouse trap. So he'd be there on all three traps, stuck. Not a half hour after we set up the traps we heard a loud squealing from under the sink, and lots of banging around. Nick and I look at each other, and smiled. Maybe we had caught the fucker. And caught it we had.

Its fucking snout was still in the pile of poison. Its body and legs glued to the giant glue-pad, and it's tail bleeding and under the metal frame of the giant mouse trap.

I looked at it and so did Nick. We must have just stared at it for like five minutes.

"George," said Nick, in a very somber voice, "that is one huge fucking rat."

"I told you so," I said to him.

He just looked at me.

"So, um, what's next?" I said to him as the rat looked up from the tray of poison at both of us.

"I guess we just throw it in the garbage," said Nick, "If we can lift that heavy sucker."

I tell Nick that that is inhumane. That it will probably live for days and days, and starve to death, and that is cruel and unusual punishment.

He tells me, "Good, that'll show the fucker."

I explain to Nick that no matter what this is one of God's creatures, and we can not let it suffer like this. As I said that, IT started to squeal some more, like it understood what I was saying.

Nick finally agreed with me. Well, not really. But I think he went along with me to shut me up. He said we'd kill it.

"So, Nick, how do we do it?" I asked him.

"We could carve it up like a turkey," said Nick, as he opened the kitchen drawer full of knives.

I imagined all the blood and rat meat and told him that wasn't a good idea.

"We could shoot it," said Nick.

"We don't have a gun," I told him.

"Oh yeah," said Nick, "Damn."

Then Nick came up with an idea. He walked into my room, and came out with my old Louisville Slugger. My baseball bat.

"You want me to beat it to death?" I asked him, shocked.

"You got any better ideas, Mr. Wizard?" said Nick.

I didn't, so we agreed that I'd beat it to death.

We moved the rat out from under the sink with the bat, glue trap still attached to it's belly, and tail still in the giant mouse trap. As it lay on the kitchen floor it looked up at me and showed me it's big long fangs. I raised the bat over my head and went to crush it's skull, but I couldn't. I couldn't make myself take one of God's creatures, kill it. So I gave the bat to Nick.

"Slay it, killer," I said to Nick.

Nick held up the bat, but couldn't hit it either. Just then my mom walked into the kitchen, saw what was on the floor, screamed, and almost fainted. Nick went and sat her on their bed, and calmed her down.

"It's, it's so big," she said. Nick nodded and told her that we'd get rid of it.

Nick and I returned to the kitchen, and looked at IT on the floor.

"George," he said, "let's just throw it away. It'll die on it's own."

I thought about it again for a few moments, then told him that there was no way. That this thing had scared Wendy, my girlfriend, and deserved to die. I told him it scared me, and I was usually not a pussy. That the rat must pay for it's sins. I realized I no longer cared about "God's creature," but was hell bent on revenge, and that is what probably gave me the courage to bash it's brains in. That, and Slayer.

I went into my bedroom, leaving Nick with the bat in his hand, and the rat on the floor. I went to my closet and looked in. I felt like I was in a Rambo or Schwartzenegger movie. I reached for my old hockey shin guards, and put them on strap by strap. I then tied a bandanna around my head, and then put on my hockey helmet. Then I went to my record collection and found the meanest album I could find. A record that would make me want to kill, and kill, and kill again. Slayer's *Reign in Blood* was the album, and I knew it'd do the trick. Black Flag's *Damaged* almost could have done it,

as could have *Today Your Love, Tommorow the World* by the Ramones. But, well, Slayer had Satan on their side, and I needed the Dark Prince to kill. I put on the song "Angel of Death." I then put on my goalie gloves and walked into the kitchen, Slayer blaring behind me.

Nick looked at me, and then at the rat.

"Hey Rambo," he said.

"How ya doin'?" I said back, and then took the bat from his hands, and raised it above my head.

"Seas of blood, bury life, smell your death as it burns, deep inside of you, abacinate, eyes that bleed, praying for the end of you," screamed Tom Ayara of Slayer behind me as I looked the rat in the eyes. It looked back at me.

And suddenly I felt something for this creature, this animal, this living being that God had created. It had just as much of a right to exist as I did. It ate, slept, had sex, and probably had a real life too. It probably had a family, friends, and may have even partied on the weekends. What gave me the right to kill a living creature? Surely it had a purpose on this earth, and by me destroying it's life I was robbing the world of something, perhaps, wonderful.

I put down the bat. I couldn't do it.

Suddenly, the rat somehow managed to swing itself and the traps around, and tried to bite me in the leg. Fucker.

"Surgery, with no anesthesia, feel the knife pierce your intensely, inferior, no use to mankind, strapped down screaming out to die, Angel of Death!" screamed Slayer from behind me.

It was then I raised the bat, and bashed it's brains in. Again and again and again. It squealed and squealed, and I just kept yelling, "Fuck with me, huh? Try and bite me? I'm a guy who wears US pins on his leather jacket, and I got big sneakers, and I'm from New York, fucker! Well, fuck you. Fuck you! You stupid fucking rat. I'll punk rock your fucking head motherfucker. Stupid Rat."

I think I screamed for like two minutes as I beat the rat to death. It wouldn't die so easily. It took a lot of hard knocks on its head until it's skull would crack open.

Finally, with the rat dead on the floor, Nick opened the refrigerator door, and got me a beer. And he got himself one too.

So we stood there, Nick and me, with blood all over our legs, rat brains all over the floor, having a beer. It was one of those special stepfather and son moments. It felt nice. But the moment was cut short.

Suddenly we heard a scratching sound coming from behind the oven, and then a loud squealing.

"Miller Time's over George," he said. Then we both got back to work.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. The new Meatmen Album *Savage Sagas From the Meatmen* is awesome, if just for "The Ballad of Stinky Penis." No, seriously, best album from an early hardcore band in eons. Fast, fun, and punches you in the gut as hard as it can! It's nice to hear us old folks can be funny, but still just as pissed off!
2. I can't believe it's been twenty-four years this week since Stiv Bators, singer of the Dead Boys, passed away. Time flies too fast. I'm really glad that Jeff and Cheetah from the band are still around, and even better yet my good friends, as was Stiv.
3. In the "I can't believe it's 2014" department, I just did another one of those post-death Joey Ramone birthday bashes. This year, while all us old folks from band like the Dead Boys to the Ramones to the Sex Pistols all had a good laugh at rehearsal, when our chicks came in and saw us laughing they asked what was so funny? We giggled lots and told them we were just happy to be here—alive—while many others weren't. And if that's not something to be happy about, I don't know what is!

I don't think anyone should take advice, but there are probably a lot of things for the punks to talk about, so we might as well do it here. Think of it more as an opinion *column though. (...and if we need a tagline for that I hope it can be something as vague and inconsequential as: "A column for people who wanna know the accepted spelling of the word mixtape.")*

Dear Mr.R, Our drummer quit the band seemingly out of nowhere and though we're very sad to see him go, we all agree to move forward and see it as an opportunity to find a person who will be a better fit. But then he requested that we don't continue to play the two songs that he contributed riffs for (intellectual property doesn't mix with DIY punk, right?) The thing is, the rest of us feel like those songs are more than just his, since we all put our own unique touches on them, and they're so evolved from what he initially brought to the table. We want to continue playing them, but we also don't want to part ways on a sour note. I've already asked him to reconsider once, promising that he would get songwriting credit if we recorded them, and he firmly declined. What should we do?

The actual super short version answer is that you'll just have to decide how important it is to leave on strict good terms, because if it's really important, you'll have to force yourself off of those songs no matter how unreasonable you feel the situation is. But if you want to keep from ending on a sour note by making sure the playing of the songs is still *justified* before you choose that path, then keep reading for the longer answer! And really, I think the response should actually change depending on the amount of riff that has been contributed to the songs. Like, when you bring a little piece of something you've been dabbling with to band practice, and everyone adds their distinctive touch and it becomes a song by the Shitheadz, then you gotta leave that one behind when you quit the Shitheadz. It's band property. Like practice space rent or those three boxes of seven inches someone still has in their garage. If it's a bass or drum part in question, you could always keep the song and just change those parts. I agree that it does seem as though there's a difference in ownership when someone shows up at practice with something they wrote almost fully, or when they've had a creative vision for a song. It makes more sense to me that they would request the band stop playing it when they leave. It seems fine for them to want to have creative access to the song in the future, I guess. Maybe they want to take it with them to use on their own or with their more compatible *new* band. Really though, that would only mean that you, sadly, wouldn't be able to record any of those songs, but everything will always be fair in covers and you can play them live as often as you want without having to worry about it. Or the shortest answer of all: just write more songs!

Dear Mr.R, Are "mix CDs" retro and quaint yet, or are they still just the lazy fast less-romantic way to make a mix?

In the style of Family Feud, I had this plan to poll a whole bunch of punks and then come up with the ranked responses and a definitive "number one answer," and there'd be all the fun of the Feud, with one hundred percent less Steve Harvey, but, in the end it wouldn't work. The responses turned out to be more age-based than anything. I mean, everyone agrees that the most important part of the whole deal is, of course, the thought, blah blah blah, but also the amount of effort that you put into the making of the thing, which is where this generational thing starts happening. What constitutes actual "effort" really varies. Like, it turns out that when you are someone who grew up having to make a mixtape by holding your shitty boombox

up to the speaker of your shitty record player while trying to be reeeallly quiet, or if you're a record collecting person who was able to distinguish yourself romantically by including the perfect song from a hard-to-find 7", chances are you're not going to swoon as hard over the "effort" it took them to drag a song from an internet library into a playlist before hitting the *burn* button. CDs are also perceived as cheap and impermanent which is generally not the message you're trying to convey by way of the mix gesture. And there is always that haunting question, "Did they just use *shuffle* for this?"

Conversely, younger to mid-twenties aged people acted as though I was a monster for suggesting a mixed CD might mean that you weren't even trying. It turns out that people see cassettes as well as CDs as being obsolete and that "getting with the times" means just making someone a playlist. Also, and I quote "If [you] are going to make it, go full retro and go for cassette. Just be considerate enough to get them a Walkman to go with it." Burn.

In summation, it turns out that this debate is the walking-ten-miles-in-the-snow-to-get-to-school of our times, so just know your audience, I guess. I did make sure this question was discussed in a selfish hypothetical way for total honesty research purposes, which means any serious swooning will vary quite a bit in real life. Sometimes when you really like a person, they could actually take a dump on your table and you would just smile and blush.

Send all the inquiries to: askmrr@mail.com. All of my opinions are really burning a hole in my pocket.

It had been in the nineties all day and the air conditioner at work was fucked, causing the manager offices and the hallways to be ice cold, but the offices for the rest of us to be sweltering (80). I picked up doing these dumb brain games on my phone and I fucking swear to god it was making me think of genius things. On the train there was no space to discretely take off my wig, so I spent the whole commute with a hair hat, the train cars are air conditioned though. I texted a genius idea to my constant collaboBuddee and he gave an uncharacteristic flat reply: "Good call."

I got home and stripped every shred of clothing off my body. I went to the bathroom, filled the sink with cold water and submerged a shirt in it, wrung it out, put it back on. It was a dumb trick I had learned years earlier in one of the two summer days that Olympia sweats its brains out. I was lying on the floor at my friend's house who had her shit together, she made me a sandwich.

When my best buddee called he was awkward and I was awkward because I was in the midst of listening to his newest hit record, a mess of sounds compiled in one ten hour sesh in Austin (this place was probably sweltering too). He said he had terrible news and I assumed he was canceling our Monday plans of having island time and recording a hit double sax record. I was on the verge of almost blurting out "It's fine, I have so much studying to do." But actually he was calling to let me know that a friend of ours killed himself.

I didn't write a column last month, I was halfway done with all my writing and already past deadline when I found out about Mick. I'm sitting here past deadline now. Writing something upbeat feels inappropriate. Writing something ranty feels inappropriate. Writing about this feels wrong, but not writing about it feels wrong. Every action feels inappropriate; going to work, going to a show, laughing, drinking too much, drinking too little, eating, not eating, whatever.

I told my best buddee if he needed anything to call, I got off the phone and everything seemed hotter, no way to get comfortable, no comfort. I was reading a big book that stuck to my thighs. Nothing was cold. It was a warm night the night before. He died on a warm night. It's coming up to a month and still a lot of actions feel inappropriate. I've been trying to write a column, everything I wrote led back to this subject, I'll let it in. I was avoiding this because I didn't want to be exploitive. I didn't want to make it about me (I am making it about me), but what else do I say? I only exist in my head, I only have my take on it (the world). But I couldn't just brush his death under the rug. So, how do we talk about death? Or really how do I talk at you (write at you?) about death?

Pretty consistently every time Mick's death comes up around people who didn't know him the questions asked tend to be what happened? (Both as in how he did it and why) and was there a note? And were you close? And I get it but these questions are frustrating, I try to answer them but I feel like I'm constructing excuses for my friend killing himself and that I'm constructing excuses for feeling sad about it. A week after his death I went to Olympia just to hang out and had dinner with a friend of mine that recently moved up there from here, meaning she knew Mick, but was mostly surrounded by people who didn't. The majority of her conversations about it were an explanation of her friend's death. She said there was one person who didn't ask anything, but just gave her a hug and that's all she wanted. Mostly I've gotten to be around mutual friends, switching in between memories and silence and crying.

A friend of mine was having a really hard time once and she said she felt, "painfully alive" and I feel that this is a good explanation. Mick was kind and funny and deeply troubled. He was a really good drummer. In really good bands. Bands that have appeared in here in the past. He was really young. Sometimes he did or said shitty things because he's a real person and we can all be turds sometimes. He was angry, but it was pretty much all inward. I heard he had a shit time growing up and I don't know the details, but I don't need to, why would people claim that if it wasn't true? Or I trust them, I trust him, I trust my friends. And why the fuck would I need to know the details of something to know it's real?

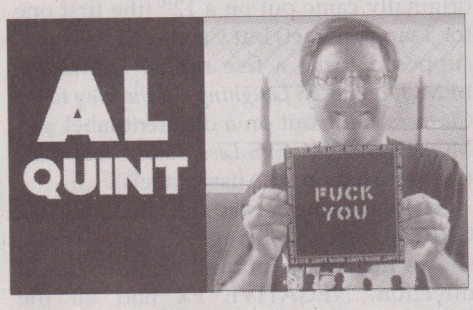
I met Mick when he was nineteen and still living in Bakersfield, one of the crew of Bakersfield buddies that pretty much all live up here now. Our bands played together in a place I refer to as the pizza basement even though that's not what it's called, but everyone from Bakersfield knows what I'm talking about. There was a Ramones mural on the wall. Mick and his best friend Stephen were giving away a video they made called *Dollar Scoops* that was about a tour they went on that was absurd and pranky. My copy was dubbed over an old copy of *Terminator*. Afterwards we went to the place we were staying and ate chips and a jar of nacho cheese spread out on a bag. Mick was obnoxious and overly excited and funny. He moved up here pretty soon after. He seemed to instantly be in a gazillion bands and ended up on tour so much. He always brought cans of Pringles to share and, I swear to god, at every show I saw him at I spotted him eating ice cream at some point. We talked about giving in and writing down the weird tunings of our guitars so the songs of our respective bands wouldn't sound different every time. We would get excited about records and do that yelling in agreeance thing.

Since Mick died there has been an uptick in caring in the social circle I exist in. Everyone is asking, "how are you doing" in a genuine way. But everything has a slight luster of shit to it. I keep feeling anxious

and mundane bullshit seems worse than it really is and I wonder why I'm freaking out, did I eat today? How much have I slept in the last four days how much did I drink? Should I up my medication? Somewhere in there it occurs to me my friend died and that's probably the ubiquitous bad feeling. Everyone is heartbroken, it seems like we'll be ok (I think?) A slight comfort that feels so strange to say is at least he's at peace now. He was so troubled at least he's at peace now. But our friend is gone.

I was collecting rent for my practice space and a mutual friend wrote me a check for it and he had written "MAY SUCKED" in the memo line. Yeah, it sucked. Yes, it fucking sucks.

Bye Mick, RIP.



Double Nickles Inside the Zen Arcade

I was all set to write about what a fucking idiot Exene Cervenka of X is to say that Elliott Rodger's mass shootings in California were a hoax or some sort of conspiracy staged in an attempt to push for gun control. Even though she offered a half-assed apology, Exene has been expressing some rather paranoid and bizarre notions for a while.

As others have pointed out, maybe the lyrics to "Los Angeles" were autobiographical: "She started to hate every n****r and Jew / Every Mexican that gave her lotta shit / Every homosexual and the idle rich / She had to get out..." In a *Rolling Stone* interview, she said, "when I think about California, I think of a liberal oppressive police state and regulations and taxes and fees. I'd rather go someplace and have my own little place out on the edge of town. I'm a country girl at heart. It makes me happy when I see people in Texas open-carrying. It makes me feel safe."

Anyway, I don't think I want to pay much more mind to an alleged "godmother" of punk, someone whose worthwhile musical legacy consists of two decent albums, a couple of 7"s (including "White Girl," the best song they ever wrote), and a couple of compilation appearances. Incidentally, if any of you share her conspiracy theories, please don't clog my mailboxes, online or off-line, with Alex Jones-type dreck. I'm *really* not interested.

As for the title of my column, you might recognize it as an amalgam of the titles of two 1984 double albums on SST Records by the MINUTEMEN and HÜSKER DÜ respectively. They were released the same day, after the minutemen decided to do a double album upon hearing that the Hüskers had finished theirs. While *Double Nickels On the Dime* has been an inspiring album whose brilliance I've increasingly recognized over the years, *Zen Arcade* had immediacy and a life-changing impact on me. Most of you will be reading this in July, which is the 30-year anniversary of *Zen Arcade*'s release. I've written about it in the past, but it seems like a good time to sum up why it meant so much to me.

Summer of 1984—I was 24 years old, working in a bank, mad at the world. Punk was what kept me going—it was my solace, it was my joy. I spent my time playing in my band NO SYSTEM, going to shows and, of course, doing my zine, which switched its name from *Suburban Punk* to *Suburban Voice* during that time. In fact, ARTICLES OF FAITH were on the cover of the first *SV* (#11, overall), and that interview was done when I saw them play with Hüsker Dü. That was the only time I ever saw the Hüskers get upstaged. It was a great night at Pulaski Hall in Easthampton, MA, playing frisbee with Bob Mould and Grant Hart and getting to interview Vic Bondi. It was an encounter that felt like the turning of a corner for both my zine and my life.

Then, about a month later, I got my hands on *Zen Arcade* and devoured it for pretty much two straight weeks nonstop. For those of you who haven't heard it before, it's a concept album (don't run away screaming—please!). Bob Mould's autobiography *See A Little Light* says that the story's loose plot is "a bright kid leaves his broken home and heads to Silicon Valley to design a computer game called "Search." We started writing songs and loosely creating characters: the kid who designed the video game, his girlfriend, Pinkie, his cigar-smoking boss." Those plot points aren't all part of the songs, though. I always looked at it as a classic coming-of-age story, struggling with the onset of adulthood, of not living up to parental expectations. The lines "Mom and Dad, I'm sorry / Mom and Dad, don't worry / I'm not the son you wanted but what could you expect? / I've made my world of happiness to combat your neglect" really hit home. So did the sense of confusion on "What's Going On?" ("What's going on *INSIDE MY HEAD*?!")

The four sides of the double LP are relatively distinct. You get an overview on side one, starting with the driving noise-pop of "Something I've Learned Today," aggressive hardcore, bitter acoustic pop and experimentation—there's a snippet of the fourteen minute "Recurring Dreams" called "Dreams Recurring" and a Hare Krishna mantra. Side two is some of most relentless hardcore the band ever dished out, until the closing ballad "Standing by the Sea." Side three could be called the poppy side, featuring a few piano interludes between some melodic gems before the conceptual material concludes with the dream-like "The Tooth Fairy and the Princess," repeating "don't give up, don't let go, don't give in, don't let on / In your bed, late at night, red hot red, don't get up" ending with whispers of "wake up." So it was apparently all a dream, but dreams reveal certain truths. Side four has just two tracks—the hard rocking "Turn On the News" and previously mentioned fourteen minute "jam"-like onslaught, with its howling peaks and valleys. In all honesty, I usually turn off the album after the third side, but I don't think I'd necessarily consider those tracks throwaways, just something I don't listen to all that often.

Bob expresses mixed feelings about the album's legacy. He states, "*Zen Arcade* means a whole lot more to others than it does to me," and he says he'd already "began to outgrow and move beyond those feelings almost at the moment I documented them." He describes it as "a visceral statement. It felt right." He concludes that the fact *Zen Arcade* continues to resonate with people is its reward to him. It most certainly does resonate. Maybe in a slightly different way some 30 years later, but it definitely came along at the right time and place for me.

None of this is to slight *Double Nickels* (which I got awhile after *Zen Arcade*) — it's the MINUTEMEN's own magnum opus, with the band at their absolute peak, embracing everything from their funky, punky rock to such works of beauty as "Do You Want New Wave or Do You Want the Truth?" and "History Lesson, Pt. 2." I'd argue that this album and one of their 1983 releases, *Buzz Or Howl Under the Influence of Heat*, are the band's finest efforts. The latter includes some of my favorite Minutemen tracks: "The Product," "I Felt Like A Gringo," and the seething "Little Man With A Gun In His Hand," which was repeated on *Double Nickels*. After this album, they moved in a somewhat more accessible (or "mersh," as they described it) direction for *Project: Mersh* and *3-Way Tie (For Last)*, before D. Boon's untimely death in 1985. Same with the Hüskers, *New Day Rising* followed *Zen Arcade* and included some superb tracks, but it wasn't up to the latter's level. Quality took a noticeable dip for *Flip Your Wig* and the two mediocre major label albums that followed.

Incidentally, Mike Fournier's book about *Double Nickels*, which is part of the *33 1/3* paperback series, is well-worth checking

out. He does a great job of breaking down the album track-by-track and also providing an informative overview. The Hüskers' emphasis tended to emphasize the personal side of things (or telling stories, as Bob Mould once told me in an interview), although songs like "Real World," "Deadly Skies" and, of course, "In A Free Land" were more overtly political. On the other hand, the MINUTEMEN wore their social consciences on their sleeves, but did so without coming across as dogmatic or preachy. Boon's lyrics had a bit more directness that Watt's, but there was a sensible, observational working class approach to their political viewpoints. I really became a fan when seeing them open for BLACK FLAG. It all just clicked at that moment, and their tour with the Hüskers was one of the best double-bills I ever saw.

WEIRD SCENES INSIDE THE GOLDMINE

...as opposed to the arcade. Enough poetic license and, no, I'm not doing an analysis of the DOORS' anthology, even if Ray Manzarek produced X's albums. By the way, I never did much care for the organ that he added on "Nausea." I'm not even reviewing anything that weird in the coming paragraphs...

On their second 12" *Chained*, STOIC VIOLENCE plays hardcore the way it was always meant to be played: stomping, mean and nasty, an exultation of rage and anger. Not that there isn't room for uplift from time to time, but sometimes you just want bile, you just want emotional release, you want to vent. And you want to do it without becoming bogged down in tedious heaviness. When these guys slow it down for the concluding track "Empty Inside," you can hear vocalist Branden Hutchins howl his guts out, repeating the song's title until there's nothing left and everything has been stripped down to his emanations being accompanied by an ominous bass line. "Two Faced," "Choke," and "No Escape" are also bruising fist-pumpers. The whole thing's done in a bit over ten minutes and, sure, it might have fit on a 7", but this way the full-blown sonics aren't compromised and the disc is packaged inside a gatefold sleeve and has a full-sized, fold-out lyric insert. Everything this band has released to date has been top-notch and they are a live monster. (Video Disease, www.videodiseaserecords.com)

VIOLENT OUTBURST is also mean and bellicose-sounding on their *Survival Signs* EP. This Virginia band has apparently already called it quits and some of them ended up playing with MERCY KILLINGS (whose 7" is absolutely killer). Tough-as-nails hardcore with harsh vocals and a muscular, mid-to-fast paced attack, sometimes reminiscent of a band like 86 MENTALITY. This is something to get the boots stomping hard, especially "Shoot 'Em Up." (Agitate, agitaterecords.bigcartel.com; Tension Head, tensionheadrecords.bigcartel.com)

Agro-Wax Records generally just releases Houston bands but label honcho Mike decided to put out an EP called *Vegetative State* by the Italian band LEXICON DEVIL and it's a five-song expression of rage. Despite the name, they don't sound like the GERMS. This is blitzkrieg hardcore punk driven by rumbling bass, sturdy drumming, and more-than-adequate guitar blaze—closer to RAW POWER's muse than the other old school Italian bands. This is a stellar debut. (Agro Wax, agrowax.blogspot.com)

Tony Erba has been around a long time. Not quite as long as yours truly, but he's been playing in bands the likes of 9 SHOCKS TERROR, GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS, FACE VALUE and CHEAP TRAGEDIES for around a quarter century at this point. His newest band is FUCK YOU PAY ME, and their self-titled debut album is out on Schizophrenic records. It finds a middle ground between hardcore punk and rock'n'roll or, perhaps more accurately, mixes them together. There's a certain Gordon Solie-ish flair to the band's theme song, which comes storming out of the gate at a full-bore pace. "Driving Me to Drink" borrows from BLACK FLAG's "Thirsty and Miserable." Tony might not be a kid anymore but he still sounds as pissed as ever and, on some of the songs here, turns his attention to the declining conditions and plight of the worker ("Scab City," "Factory of Sadness," "Smear Campaign"). It's not a dissertation but a bird's-eye view borne from personal experiences. Of course, he also laments the declining quality of pro-wrestling on "Black Saturday." This is power-packed and ass-kicking throughout. (17 W. 4th St, Hamilton, ON L9C 3M2, Canada, www.schizophrenicrex.com)

Last but not least, I can't believe it's been 30 years since Curtis Casella handed me a test pressing of the first release on his new label, which he had named Taang! Records. That record was GANG GREEN's *Sold Out* 7", with the title track b/w (anyone use that term anymore? Backed with?) "Terrorize." He hadn't even printed up the sleeves yet. Not too shabby a debut, as "Sold Out" is a hardcore anthem for all time. I remember visiting Curtis at the farmhouse in Auburndale, MA that served as the label's headquarters for a time. He was always a loyal supporter and advertiser for *Suburban Voice*, although he could sometimes be a bit tardy in getting the ad copy to me. I remember having to stop by the farmhouse once or twice to pick up the ad while on my way to the printers, then getting out my bottle of rubber cement and pasting the ad into the layout on the hood of my car!

The GANG GREEN 7" is now part of a box set, *The First Ten Singles*, released by Taang! for record Store Day (which has become something of a contrived thing but that's another story for another time) that houses ten 7"s (natch), a CD with all of the songs, and a glossy booklet with Curtis' ruminations on and reminiscences of each release. There's a bit of cheating, since NEGATIVE FX's recordings originally came out on a 12" (the first one for Taang!, in fact) but Curtis claims it was supposed to be a five song 7". And the LEMONHEADS *Laughing All the Way to the Cleaners* came out on a different label and MOVING TARGETS *Less Than Gravity* EP was released on an Aussie label.

There is some classic stuff here. GANG GREEN's second Taang! 7", *Skate To Hell*, shows the band's punk-meets-rock'n'roll direction. NEGATIVE FX had all the hallmarks of the best of Boston hardcore: gutteral vocals from Jack "Choke" Kelly and a wailing, cyclone-like musical attack, although they would slow it down for the Oi-tinged "Feel Like A Man." Choke's next band LAST RIGHTS, who played a grand total of one show, contribute "Chunks," one of the best hardcore songs to ever come out of Boston. The LEMONHEADS already have the melodic element in place here, though they were rougher and scrappier in their early days. Bands like LAST STAND (and their predecessors NOONDAY UNDERGROUND), STRANGLEHOLD, and the OYSTERS have a sound rooted in classic punk crossed with a rock'n'roll sensibility. I always thought MOVING TARGETS were better live than on record, but the three-song *Less Than Gravity* EP catches their hard-driving melodic punk sound well. Finally, SLAPSHOT is represented with "Same Mistake" and the crowd-pleasing "Might Makes Right," which was originally a NEGATIVE FX song.

To use a cliché, this box set is a Boston hardcore and punk time capsule. It's musically diverse, but all of these bands complement each other well, with a kinship that transcends any sort of category. (Taang!, www.taang.com)

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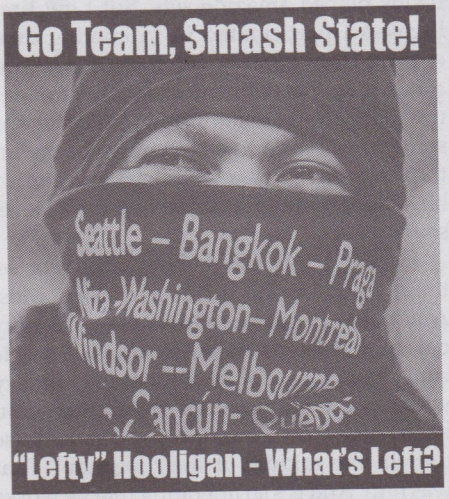


It's an infamous *MRR* cover. Number 130, March 1994. Tim Yo designed it, although I don't remember who put it together. A slew of Marvel Comic style action figure characters surround the headline "Superheroes of the Underground??" A bald buff super skinhead labeled Hawdkaw Man, further marked with A.F. for Agnostic Front, growls: "I stomp da pussies wit an attitude as big as my 20 eyelet Docs!!" Str8 Edge Man, a caped Superman clone with Shelter on his chest, proclaims: "I convert the hostile flocks with a 1-2 punch of Religion & Republicanism!" Pop Man, aka Green Day, reveals: "I lull my opponents into complacency with dippy love songs!" And the snark continues with snide remarks from Metal Man (The Melvins), Emo Man (Still Life), Vegan Man (Profane Existence), Grunge Man (Nirvana), and Arty Farty Man (sporting an Alternative Tentacles logo).

Tim put this cover together for the issue in which he announced *MRR*'s Great Purge, in which Tim proclaimed that nothing but the most primitive, the most basic, the most raw rock and roll would be deemed punk. That's how punk rock began in the mid-to-late '70s; two or at most three chords, distorted and undifferentiated, loud and fast. Ignoring the debate over whether punk first began in the UK or USA, and disregarding whether it was the Ramones or the Sex Pistols that started punk, punk did not remain primal or simple or crude for long. Musicians brought their histories and influences to the music, the music cross-pollinated and hybridized with other music, and both the music and the musicians got more sophisticated with time. By 1993, punk was a welter of styles, categories and scenes. And by the end of 1993, Tim had decided to purge punk rock down to its roots and to restrict the magazine he ran, *MRR*, to this limited musical content.

I've described when Tim Yo announced the firing of Jeff Bale at a year end General Meeting in December of 1993. I've called that the Great Purge when, in fact, the most contentious agenda item at that meeting for most of the shitworkers present was Tim's decision to severely curtail the kind of music *MRR* considered reviewable as punk. And Tim's Great Purge was indeed two-fold—firing Jeff Bale and purging punk music. Tim was by no means a raving Maoist when he ran *MRR*, but he'd had his political upbringing in the New Communist Movement of the 1970s. I remember Tim discussing afterwards his strategy going into the December 1993 meeting, and I'll liberally paraphrase it from a previous column: "I combined an attack on the right with an attack on the left. I cut down the stuff we would review as punk, knowing that Jeff would be one hundred percent behind my decision. At the same meeting I took out Jeff. I played the right and the left against each other, just like Stalin did."

That Tim Yo might have been involved with the RCP at one time, or admired Stalin, or even sometimes ran *MRR* as Mao might are such a small part of what the man was or what he did. But it does help me to segue into my broader subject. While it is hard to apologize for Tim's overtly authoritarian tendencies, it isn't hard to admire his appreciation for punk rock's musical purity. The urge to purify, the impetus to purge an individual, organization, art form, culture, politics, or society of incorrectness, error, impurity, deviance, corruption, decadence, or evil; that's what I'm talking about here. For a recent and particularly insidious example of this, lets turn to anarchist politics in the San Francisco Bay Area and the efforts of identity anarchists to purge post-left anarchists.

I have little sympathy for either of the two tendencies acting out this sordid drama. Post-left anarchism categorically rejects the Left, from the social democracy and Marxism-Leninism of the Old Left to the Maoism and Third Worldism of the New Communist Movement that devolved from the New Left, as well as any anarchism that is in the least bit influenced by the Left. This is not merely a refusal of the Left's ideological content, but of its organizational forms as well, from meetings run by Robert's Rules of Order to various kinds of party-building. But nothing unites post-left anarchism beyond this negation, leaving a disparate gaggle of personalities in Hakim Bey (ontological anarchy/TAZ), Bob Black (abolition of work), John Zerzan (primitivism), Wolfi Landstreicher (Stirnerite egoism), *et al*, to frivolously romp through post-left anarchism's vacuous playground. In contrast, identity anarchism is all about a positive if problematic relationship with the Left, from its ideological borrowings from Marxism-Leninism (imperialism, colonialism, etc.) to its lineage on the Left (via the quasi-Maoist Black Panther Party). The lame debates within the heavily Maoist New Communist Movement regarding the staid National Question contributed to the formulation of a "white skin privilege" theory (by way of Sojourner Truth/Noel Ignatiev) which, when suitably tweaked by proponents of "male privilege," conjugated a critique of patriarchal white supremacy fully embraced by identity anarchism. Thus, identity anarchism's embrace of Panther anarchism (of Alston, Ervin, Balagoon, Barrow, Jackson, N'Zinga, White, Sostre, following the BPP's demise) seems almost an afterthought, offering no serious counterweight to the Marxism, Leninism, Maoism and Third Worldism it enthusiastically embraces.

I will use post-left anarchism and identity anarchism in the remainder of this column as convenient shorthand for generic categories, which means I will also overly simplify who belongs to what camp.

Post-left anarchism has a decent presence in the East Bay through *Anarchy, a Journal of Desire Armed*, the annual BASTARD conference, and the Anarchist Study Group. The Study Group has been meeting weekly at the Long Haul in Berkeley for over a decade. It is structured through reading and discussing agreed-upon texts, publicly advertises locally and online, and is open to anyone to attend. At the beginning of 2013, the Study Group embarked on several months of investigation into Maoism, focusing on the New Communist Movement, reading primary documents related to the RCP, MIM, the BPP, STORM, and a plethora of alphabet soup Maoist organizations. Needless to say, these post-left anarchists were highly critical of the NCM and Maoism. Aragorn! went so far as to publish a lengthy criticism on his self-titled blog based on their studies in mid-March.

A group of identity anarchists "intervened" during a regular Tuesday night Long Haul Anarchist Study Group meeting sometime after that blog post. Hannibal Shakur, an activist in Occupy Oakland's Decolonization tendency who is fighting vandalism charges after participation in the Trayvon Martin riots, was prominent in the newly organized Qilombo Social Center in Oakland. He and his crew attended the Study Group meeting, it seems not merely to dispute their post-left anarchist critique of Maoism, the NCM and the BPP, but also to challenge their right to pursue such independent study at all. The identity anarchists harassed and harangued the post-left anarchists, and in the heat of the argument between the two sides, post-left anarchist Lawrence Jarach made a

categorical statement so typical of orthodox anarchism. To paraphrase, Jarach contended that: "All churches must be burned to the ground." An identity anarchist demanded: "But what about the black churches?" To which Jarach responded: "The black churches must be burned ... all churches must be burned." The disagreements only got nastier from there, with open acrimony escalating into implied threat.

At some point, passionate ideological disagreement turned into calculated sectarian purge. The annual San Francisco Bay Area Anarchist Bookfair set up operations at the Crucible in Oakland on May 22, 2014. The one-day bookfair gathered a multitude of anarchist tendencies, among them the *AJODA*/CAL Press vendor table and the Qilombo Center table. An "attack initiated by three people (and about ten supporters) from Qilombo began around 3:40pm when I was cornered near the restroom," reported Lawrence Jarach, "and continued after I walked back to the CAL Press/Anarchy magazine vendor table, ending at around 4 when we decided to leave." *AJODA* has since issued an Open Letter to Bay Area Anarchists protesting the Qilombo assault as well as the general anarchist apathy toward this successful purge. Those associated with the attack on Jarach in turn have communicated the following: "Qilombo was not involved in the altercation you mention that took place at the Bay Area Anarchist Bookfair, and the space has no comment on the matter. Lawrence Jarach came by the Qilombo table and antagonized a few of our volunteers, so those volunteers took it upon themselves as autonomous individuals to call him out for something that occurred at an another venue, at another point in time, and requested that he leave the bookfair. If you would like more details, you will need to reach out to the actual parties involved."

Tim Yo would have called this final evasion candy-assed.

Last column, I mentioned the feminist "intervention" at the May 9-11, 2014 Portland, Oregon Law & Disorder Conference and the increasingly acrimonious debate between Kristian Williams and the organizers of the event Patriarchy and the Movement, over the tactics of individuals and groups professing identity politics within larger leftist political circles. That the victims of patriarchal sexism and violence and their defenders are so outspoken in speech and print about the need to purge the perpetrators from The Movement only underscores the clarity of their actions. I suspect that, amongst themselves, Shakur and his identity anarchist/Qilombo brigade have summarily convicted Jarach of racism, exercising his white skin privilege, and supporting white supremacy in insisting purely on principle that all churches need to be burned down, even the black ones. Yet they won't publicly cop to running him out of the anarchist bookfair for such reasons. That they haven't openly taken responsibility for their thuggish behavior to, in effect, purge Jarach and *AJODA* from the Movement is low, even for Maoism masquerading as anarchism.

These concerted efforts to purge people from The Movement based on their ideology, or their behavior, are the self-righteous acts of those who would be judge, jury, and executioner. When Tim Yo made his futile attempt in *MRR* to purge punk rock back to its basics, the results were predictable. The magazines *Punk Planet*, *Heart AttaCk* and *Shredding Paper* started publishing circa 1994 to challenge *MRR*'s definition of punk and hegemony over the scene, followed shortly thereafter by *Hit List*. However, I doubt that Qilombo's attempt to purge Lawrence Jarach and fellow *AJODA* members will have similarly salutary effects.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I'm archiving past columns, and publishing current ones a month delayed on my blog, www.leftyhooligan.wordpress.com. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@me.com.

Right now I'm sitting on a balcony that is facing the garden of my girlfriend's family's weekend house. I'm sipping great Czech dark beer and listening to Krömosom. Trying to scribe down the Hysterics interview, figure out interview questions for other people, writing a zine in Hungarian while only wearing a Rank / Xerox shirt and underwear. Life is good I guess and I only feel spoiled when my baby is stuffing my head with her amazing grilled cheese sandwiches. It's already June and May was busy as hell in Budapest. Pleasure Leftists, Hyterics, No Problem with Voight Kampf and Condominium played shows in the capital of Hungary. All shows were great in the sense of the main bands played amazing sets. But I got tired because I participated in promoting most of these shows and doing this while having a full time job with three bands, fanzines, my first serious relationship and other shit sometimes I feel I gave too much of my life to punk. But I guess I got back in return a bit. Cause punk is amazing and I will never say it's not.

It's a bit interesting how cities got on the map of touring bands in Europe. Most American bands either know this guy named Flo or just want to know him. He runs Trapdoor Tourz a booking agency which is a total punk operation. Have you heard about the cancelling of Total Abuse tour in the middle of their journey? That was him. And it's so liberating that he works only on trust and promoters don't have to suffer through asshole bands who treat them like servants. I will serve any great band delicious food and a clean sleeping place anytime but assholes only have one chance with me.

Budapest got on his map when he heard about the scene from this other guy who runs Sabotage Records who came here with Red Dons. It was a wild show with lots of people being enthusiastic and the after party that I just missed but heard was just as wild as Red Dons' show. Flo came here with Neon Piss, who played in a rehearsal room that was packed with half naked punks who were dancing and screaming. Not the words since Neon Piss came to Europe only having a demo out and their record just got officially released on the same day they played Budapest. Not that in this day and age a release date would matter that much—since yeah, the internet—but I always loved the experience of people losing their shit, even to bands whose lyrics the crowd has no idea of. From then on bands are frequently coming here and not just from him but from a million other bands I got tons of e-mails per day. His tours are always great, but other than that, only Piss from Germany was a band who found us and we booked a show for them. Maybe it has got to do with the fact that I met their guitar player while I was hanging in Berlin and he was the only guy who liked Hungarian moonshine and at one point we were showing each other our shitty tattoos and discussing Japanese bands until I puked and passed out.

It's such a letdown cause Europe is full with amazing bands who rather stay at home or rather tour the US.

What I sadly realized at these previous shows in May was that the crowed got tamed down. My heart broke when most of my friends were just hanging out in front of the club drinking beer when Hysterics played. It's like local punks are not hungry

anymore for live bands and live shows. Or the scene just got that diverse and every subgenre has it's own shows that people only get enthusiastic for their own beloved bands not for everything.

On the one hand, as a promoter, I'm devastated by these ideas, on the other hand, as a band member, I like it. I play in one band that kinda has a crowd and even if I'm not anxious to play live, I like to play for a smaller crowd than to assholes who just scream their bullshit between songs. Punk is for everyone but for me this means you are able to create whatever you want cause no one could judge you for the result if you put your whole self into it. If putting your whole self into something ends up as yelling offensive, ignorant shit between songs to draw the crowds attention from the band to you, then I'm sorry dude but your life is sucking sad.

I miss the freaks who want to be freaks and appreciate other wild people. I hate aggression and forcing your idea of behaving at a show on others. If you think a pit is a place where you can hurt others without having consequences why don't you just beat the wall? Maybe it's my loneliness but I never understood the concept of only being able to dance to making other people fall down around you.

At the Voight Kampf show I was kinda let down because live, when playing their new songs, sounded like a punker version of New Order and while I was shaking my body I imagined the whole crowed dancing to them as people dance at a club, or as probably people were dancing in the Hacienda. I was sorry for the band because I guess they would have thought we had appreciated them more if this scene had happed, but for me just seeing and actually hearing them for the first time and having this vision in my head, it made the whole night really magical. Also since I wasn't booking this show I had the freedom to arrive late and leave early with my friends to have one more for that night and discuss movies, books and gossips.

It's funny how now, away from the city and punk reality on a long weekend, I found peace to write in a garden. I like music that fits perfect to gardens and right now I'm listening to the Gutter Gods LP. They are from Australia, a place that is far away from everything. I barely know anything about that continent except it's an almost empty island for the outcasted. Gutter Gods is a psychedelic Oi! band where Meatdog the insane drawer sings. They seem to be obsessed with the future while their music sounds so hopeless and melancholic. Sure there is aggression since a skinhead sings who has a head tattoo and psychopathic eyes and the music sounds like a really bad, never ending acid trip. It's so existential, like feeling let down for no reason, staring out the window of your flat that is facing the ocean, letting the sun's reflection set down on your face turning the sky dark and letting the city's scum crawl out to take over the streets. They have this weird outsider flavor to their music as what they do would be a secret and we could only observe the upper layers of it but will never blend with the feelings of the inner layers.

My prediction seems to be right as Gag just recorded a full length album which will be out at Iron Lung Records. I have only heard one track that came out as a preview for the whole record and it was awesome. Gag sounds like a band who would be amazing to see live. If I remember it right, and I can't check it now cause it's a garden without wifi connection, but they are from Olympia right? Haven't checked that town on Google maps but I have always visioned that town as a huge garden where people are stuffed together in punk houses, forming bands over bonfires before they fall down from their rotten plastic chairs in a weed daze. Gag probably doesn't drink because they seem such nerds and outsiders because they look too cool on photos and so energetic in live videos. Their simple recipe to write songs comes from mixing together lots of feedback and the stomping parts of SSD, the crazy noise and monotony of No Trend and same fast parts from the Midwestern craziness. They seem like a band that is probably doing it right and even they carry in their sound the feeling that this is more than just music. My friend who toured with them said they are the coolest to hang with, so probably they are not assholes.

I've got a tape from a local label with the coolest name, Pizza Days Records. For me everyday is Pizza Day thus I relate easily to his releases. Too bad it cost a lot here to press your bands on vinly and because everybody is poor as fuck it's a rare thing to happen. I got a tape of this amazing local band called Gross Out. There are some Xs before-after or between the words since Gross Out is a straightedge band in the vein of the Boston sound but their approach to such philosophy could be named as eternal tolerance. I saw them once where the singer said things between songs that actually made sense and didn't make anyone feel provoked because of their chosen way of having fun. Half of the hardcore scene talks shit on them because they are critiquing the arrogance of sXe and hardcore cliques. Funny thing is it made a louder fuss within the scene than Nazi related bands. Seems like for hardcore kids it's still the biggest problem if a band has provoking lyrics toward the crowd and it's attitude rather than rascism, sexism, homophobia, rock star attitude in the scene. Don't wear your white pants, don't start bands if you identify yourself as a woman just follow the code and don't forget the struggle. Gross Out is not just a band who says it different but they rip so fucking hard. Their guitar player is just a little boy with amazing riffs. Their singer is some musical genius who threatens their bass player to tune in for the last song which lasts 20 seconds. He is a perfect hardcore singer or will be when he will sing facing the crowd. The night I saw them he was bare foot, moving the whole crowd. It was great.

The past few weeks was not only good in getting stuff, but buying too. I could put my hands on the repressed Zouo 7". One of my all time favorite hardcore records. Mutant craziness channeled from another evil dimension. Full with ideas that basically would kill each other but here it raises the freedom level of the music. It's supposed to be fast but for some reason the manic beast of the music is restrained and on chains, it's like a dangerous power house. The whole thing is grotesque, funny and frightening at the same time. Like a vision of the failed future of punk.

Talking about failed future, some smart minds in Scandinavia re-released ex Yugoslavian bands with an amazing package art. I was lucky enough to purchase myself a Defektno Efektni 7" and a Kaos LP. I love the Balkan hardcore since it's wild as fuck but these two bands showed something more. Not as Sarlo Akrobat who were the Minutemen of the Mediterranean Sea but Defektno Efektni has this paranoid vibe which is excellently mixed together with post punkish riffs. The singer has a great theatrical voice which alienates him from humans. Cause art is not real. The gatefold 7 inch cover contains a brief bio of the band and few awesome photos. Constant guitar playing and raising tension with the battle of who could play louder, the bass or the guitars. This rerelease is essential.

Do I have to start on how great Kaos is since the *MRR* house was so loud about it even my ear in Eastern Europe could hear it? Sometimes it's ridiculous that I hear about a band that was at one of our neighbor countries from the US. What matters is that I have heard about them and now I can listen to their LP in the best format ever. It's new wave but sometimes as fun as no wave. Not more than a month ago I bought the Los Microwaves LP at a record fair. Them and Kaos have this beeping noise to their sound. Reminding us when computers had class and it was us who were using them not the other was around. It's a powerful party record for gatherings where the cop-

calling neighbors are busy serving their duty as if to be young and want to have fun would have it's cost like there were a philosophy of being the queen and king of the dance floor. Loner bedroom dancers included as well. There is a party in your headphone just push start on your music playing device.

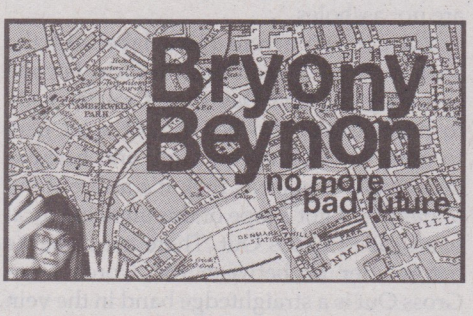
Yesterday Gross Out played as a supporting band for two boring ass straightedge bands but I went and they were super sick. Singer was angry as fuck coordinating his band just as Michael Gira did when I saw Swans. Their whole set was bridge by feedback between songs except once when they went completely silent and the crowd sounded frightened. The dead silence in the air was mixed with amazement. It was funny how the band commanded their angst on us. They used more blast beats in their new songs than they have on their demo. They played a lot with the sealed concept of hardcore. Breaking up its layers and redistributing them, picking up some pieces and laughing on them, showing how fun is it to play with the easily fragile state is hardcore. While doing this they still stayed true to the core.

The other two bands were boring for me a lot. Things I wouldn't expect at a hardcore show are bands speaking about the importance of friendship (this is irony) and being able to buy an UBR record (reality!!!!). I went through this amazing distro and went home with the UBR discography record, the Proletariat's *Soma Holiday* and a Gauze record that has "Fuck Heads" on A side and "Equality Distortion" on B. After finding these records I felt like I should drink a beer in celebration but I rather got high sitting on a curb. Way to blend in the crowd at an edge show.

I'm a man of needs and the thing about needs is it comes along with always wanting something else or more. Most of the times I wanna say the past is the past and America is America, let's hear contemporary bands from all over the world singing their lyrics in their own language. Want their voices to be instruments which are able to transform their thoughts even if I can't understand the things they are singing about. I too sing some of our songs in English but I sometimes talk in German with my girlfriend too.

So even though I get millions of e-mails from shitty bands who wanna tour, maybe great bands are not that lame that they need to write me. But I want their fans to write me fucking e-mails telling me what's great in their scene! Or whatever what was great. Some people say everything in *MRR* is shit and every band except theirs and their friends are terrible, waste of time and space. I'm quite the opposite. I do think a large part of the bands suck. Even among the good ones there are uniquely good ones who stand out and just regular bands who don't suck. But again wasting your time on hating bands, saying how everything sucks and that only what is connected to you is great is really fucking stupid. Talking about what is bad and not about what is great is Eastern European football hooliganism. When you are not about loving something but hating everything else. These people love to shit on others but hate to be shat on. I just sat in a van with such punks, who wanted to annoy, humiliate and shit on me but when by mistake I harmed them just a bit, they turned into little babies crying and really frustrated. GG Allin escaped from cops many times hiding in venue bathrooms as a scared child, covered in his own shit, scared. When did he ever get shit on? When did these scumbag people ever get hurt? Maybe their bands are good or even great. So fucking what? Millions of other bands are great too who don't fabricate this ladder of body fluids to stand above others. Fuck the haters always and forever!

MRR is not important. It's not *the* punk. It's not even *the* punk fanzine. It's just a version of punk. It's whatever the people who are doing it make out of it. It's whatever the readers think it is. It's made by some people who sometimes only write three sentences about records that could be discussed through dozens of pages and sometimes they write about their bullshit life way too long rather than just mention it in as a limb of a long sentence. Sometimes they write better than anyone else in the music biz. Life is nothing and if you think *MRR* is something that worth the time to criticize it, then you probably believe in god too. So you are a fucking idiot.



Throbbing Orogans Ordane the Profane – Hot Shots Part II: Chicago, Columbus, Pittsburgh, D.C.

Chicago's scale creeps up on you. While I'm no stranger to the couple of hours it can take to cross my own city via old, not-fit-for-their-purpose winding roads when it's maybe fifteen miles north to south (hey, suburbs is cheatin') to drive for the same amount of time, but going reasonably fast and still being in a different, equally built up part of the same city boggles my mind. Perhaps this is the source of the strange American habit of fiercely enforced "neighbourhoods" with their own identities, endless debates over where one becomes another. Likewise, Chicago's spread-out-ness creates an obviously ridiculous impression that there aren't even that many people here. This always strikes me with any American city that isn't New York. Space. Midwestern pickpockets can't be getting much play. London is a place to learn to jostle strategically down pavements just about wide enough for one, the nuclear impact of a well-aimed "ex*CUSE ME*." Walking in London is also about perfecting that urban shoulder dance, an insurmountable reflex with accompanied embarrassment every time: beggar or suit, this universal neurological tick means that two strangers trying to let each other pass will both correct themselves at the same time at least twice and appear, for a second, to be dancing. I think all of these things as we stroll down a wide, sunny street towards a dog park, arms a-swinging, full of gluten. Ben and I have broken off from the party to meet our friend, the sweetest man disguised as the scariest man: Angry Andy. We stop at a record shop and I buy a copy of Scritti Politi – *Skank Bloc Bologna*, staples'n'all. It is one of my favourite records, I am excited to have it in my hands in the first record shopping stop since we hit the road. It is especially great, as we've been listening to it a lot on the drive there. Sadly, the guy behind the counter does not care about any of this. I make small talk about the statistical likelyhood of finding one at home being higher before realising it's the US import. "There are a lot of British people here today…" he says disinterestedly in an Australian accent. We go to the park and talk about young people, reactionaries and dogs. We find the rest of the crew and play a pretty decent set. We play a song we haven't played on tour that is single note picking for the vast majority of it and I burn with embarrassment at my lack of dexterity. My mind is heavy always with the wild reality, proven that evening particularly, of what weird magic it must be for people so very far from home to give a shit about our band when I have such a truly limited grasp of my instrument. Punk. The entire stretch of tour I receive not a single post-gig comment that makes me feel bummed/objectified/rage, which is a serious departure, but possibly more to do with the amazing shows and bands and promoters than anything cultural. The highlight of the night is seeing Broken Prayer absolutely smash it and catching up with people I haven't seen for a long time. Cases in point: We stay with Liz who has a poster of the lyrics to Reality Asylum and a plush rasta banana. Ben cuddles the banana

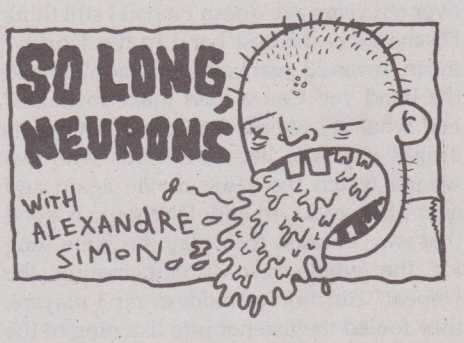
to sleep while Louis reads aloud in his best Gee Vaucher voice. Lullabies. The next day we meet for Taco Veloz with only person I know who speaks with as much authority on BDS as he does BDSM: Zach London.

The size of our touring party meaning that we're split between van and car means different vibes for different tribes, which is pretty great for switching things up. The Chicago to Columbus drive was visually very unstimulating aside from one or two native reservations, so was all about cranking some Blink 182 (if you can tell me when that name was last mentioned in these pages I'll give you some money) and testing each other's limits whilst bizarrely remembering every word, wondering what important information has fallen out of my brain in the meantime. It reminded me in an arrestingly vivid way of a summer trip when I would have been around fifteen with some BFFs I didn't know if I was in love with or terrified of with who constantly berated me for being frigid (yes, at 15), a stinging charge to which I think I eventually responded in my own special way by giving one of their boyfriends a blowjob in a rock club (more likely to have been Fear Factory than Blink 182 playing at the time) after twelve alcopops. Teenage morality. So weird that we never noticed how much pop punk hated us as nearly-women. I hope the "rookie generation" are too clever for this shit and don't feel the need to suck off any greebos in doing so. I digress.

Columbus is going to get an unfair press here as the quote-unquote "worst night of tour" because the van got broken into, with only Ellie's bag getting taken (all her clothes, camera, passport), but let's foreground this by saying that bands and venue (Catherines, Nervosas, the Ace of Cups) were totally sick and Micky and Jeff from Nervosas were the sweetest hosts and took great pains to make getting the van repaired so much easier. Before all this happened, we got to try the much vaunted "pickleback" shot—whiskey into literal pickle juice—a taste sensation so deeply odd I still wonder if I hallucinated it. Columbus also goes down in the admittedly marginal Throb history as the last place we played the song "Feminazi" live, so badly did we butcher it. Taylor also convinced us to do a birthday improv jam for them. Ellie dealt with the blow to her personal belongings with the kind of sage stoicism she is famed for and we made great use of the extra chill time at Micky's house by getting coffee and making bunch, AKA testing the limits of a host's hospitality by effectively moving in. Daniele and I passed talked about Pixar and capitalism. Later that afternoon, we began the drive to Pittsburgh with Taylor at the wheel. Taylor plays bass in Priests, and through their ability to ask all the right questions like a deeply wise, permanently horny owl, they forcibly remove even the most repressed of Brits from their shells of low level self-loathing; it's abundantly clear that everyone has developed their own special crush on Taylor by the third night of tour. Thankfully, there's more than enough love to keep everyone happy. We eat sick pizza and then play a cool basement in a house in Pittsburgh, then drive late to the home of Priests, Washington, D.C.

Interlewd: G.L Jaguar plays the electric guitar in a band called Priests. He is a snack enthusiast, a darling with no sense of danger, a proponent of his own patented look ("sleazy beachwear"), a careful driver, an old-fashioned gentleman, a giant baby, a funfair ride, a burning spirit, a gentle soul, a thoughtful clown and a reeeeal big music fan. G.L Jaguar is the last true American dandy, a man who knows how to take a joke to its cringe-inducing conclusion with asthma-attack inducing results. He wears a crystal on a chain around his neck like he knows true sadness. He is generous with his love and a force of light in the lives of others.

The tour was booked transatlantically by Priests and myself, and due to work commitments for the Throb, we started with a D.C. date bang in the middle—on Damaged City fest. Priests were booked on the main stage and we played the after show with Semper Eadem, their first show. It was a huge blessing that we got to play the aftershow as we would not have gone over well on that huge stage. Priests, on the other hand, are *made* for that kind of spectacle. Watching them do their thing in a capital H Hardcore context kind of solidified what a truly great band they are, holding their own quite entirely demanding attention and playing so hard, poking two fingers up the arse of the turgid notion that "hard" needs to involve palm muting. It was also a super cool thing for me as someone who came up through hardcore, being told so often I'd never be able to be an active part of it, to play on the same bill as Infest. We had a giant cannoli (cannoli of cannolis, a large cannoli full of small cannolis) that Grace had driven up from Philadelphia on our merch table and loads of pals old and new came to say hello. It was the first really hot day of the tour and apparently the same weekend as a festival relating to all the pink flowers on the trees in DC, which made everything look very beautiful. During the afternoon we went to another show across town to see Anna Nasty, who was due to perform as Olivia Neutron-John, and who had fixed my guitar for me that morning. I am convinced they also imbued it with magical powers. The after show we played started at 11pm and I was terrified of sleep coming for me too soon and just dozing right off the stage. Semper Eadem's set reminded me of a road trip to see 86 Mentality in a barn in Belgium eight years ago. Steve woz a skin before u woz a skin etc. It was scary to play without Priests, but I got buzzy drunk, the gig was rammed and people moshed when we played. Hardcore Throb.



One thing that's a bit odd is when people refer to me as "a punk". I mean, come on—I'm 32 years old. And I'm French, too. Why would I want to be called something that used to be an insult aimed at extravagant English teenagers in the late '70s? Also, at the risk of disappointing our youngest readers, I am *not* a music style. If I was writing for a folk fanzine would people call me "a folk"? If I was way into trip-hop would they call me "a trip-hop"?
"Alexandre Simon? Forget it, that guy's a trip-hop!"

"I saw a bunch of trip-hops running down the streets—mate, they were chasing a group of folks."

To me, "punk music" can mean a lot of things, from Räjäyttäjät to Sieg Heil, from Los Invasores to Warum Joe, from Feedtime to Fottutissima Pellicceria Elsa, the Suburban Reptiles to Stalag, the Rats to, well, another the Rats, from Überkrøppling to Tyvek, SIDA to Kuolema, the Achtungs to Bière Sociale, from Hank Wood and the Hammerheads to X-Ray Spex, Lost Kids to Lost Boys, Nigel Pepper Cock or Bratmobile, Infest or the Stooges, the Velvet or Vertical Slit, hell, you get my point—I'm a good sport, and on a good day I'll even let you say fucking Fugazi's a punk band if you buy me a beer.

However, when referring to a person, the word "punk" can only mean *one* thing: that this person is (or looks like) a teenager dressed like a member of early Discharge or the Ramones, which is fine for them I guess, but, hey… Look at me! I'm as casually dressed as one can be—plain shirt, plain pants, no particular hairstyle, no extravagant anything. On a given day I'll come back from work, put on a Bob Dylan CD, sit at my desk to edit some book or pamphlet I'm working on, read or write for a couple hours, then I'll listen to

a Coltrane or Coleman record, microwave some dinner, drink a couple beers, then *maybe, if* I'm in a good mood, I'll play some mp3s by Life Stinks, Occult Blood, Velvet Whip or the Phone Sex Robots at a reasonable volume before going to bed. What in this schedule gives you the right to call me a punk? Just because I decided to call my fanzine *Ratcharge* on a lazy day over ten years ago doesn't mean I still think Discharge is the best band in the world. I mean, I was 22 years old! Rat hadn't joined the band yet! Can a man make mistakes? For what it's worth I think Discharge is alright if you're like those kids who just wanna watch the same movie again and again for weeks on end. Discharge is good that way, because they play the same song for the whole record! Anticipating the "repeat" function of modern mp3 players, they fooled the listener into listening to the same jam with a different title twelve times in a row. Geniuses!

Anyway, one thing that's worse than "a punk" is "the punks", or even worst: "THE PUNX". Now let's be real for a moment: I AM NOT A PART OF THIS GROUP OF PEOPLE. When I think of "the punx" I picture a group of self-conscious teenaged fashion victims (or adults dressed as teenaged fashion victims) having a nice picnic in a park on a Sunday afternoon… And, most likely, they're calling it "political" because it's vegetarian. Fuck! What would Iggy say? Nothing, you idiot, Iggy Pop is dead! Isn't he? Oh, that was Loud Reed… Well, same old bullshit, right?

***

I wrote the above at 5 am a few weeks ago, just after my second cup of coffee, in a train going from Lyon to Strasbourg (America: time to dig out the map). After writing, I fell asleep and didn't finish the text, so I have no idea what I was trying to convey, but probably nothing, just fucking around with words for the sake of fucking around… With that said, if you're wondering why I still write for *MRR*, I'll tell you that I wonder pretty often, too. One of the reasons is that it's a good way to flex my rusty English, now that I don't travel as much as I used to. Another reason is that, well, they let me do so, and I'm a polite person. A third reason is that, as much as I despise "the punx," I still get kicks from punk music (and I don't mean Belgrado or fucking Blondie, I mean "*punk music*"), a "style" that's exciting enough if you know how to dig gold in a puddle of piss… And to illustrate my point, here are a few recent bands/ records I'd recommend checking out.

GOOD THROB – LP. Dunno what (if any) wave of feminism these gals and guy subscribe to (where are we at now, fifth, sixth wave?), but whatever, count me in anyway. Of course their jams are *the shit*, making up for their ineptness with killer idea after killer idea, what you may call "a vision" fueled by lonely nights blasting *Messthetics* comps and Drunk With Guns bootlegs, but what really sets my brain on fire is how different Good Throb's lyrics and general attitude is from what one usually pictures when imagining the "post-Riot Grrrl attitude" (for lack of a better term… Please be aware that I'm conscious I might be talking outta my ass). There are no complaints here, no positivity either, no encouragement to unite, just pure hate and bile directed towards those it may concern (that's you, me, and the rest of the world, by the way). There are tons of angry dudes playing "hate-filled hardcore" these days, but a lot of times it feels like their "hate" is directed at nothing but the slowness of their postman to deliver their latest Katorga Works order. Good Throb, my friends, have no time to waste on such mundane bullshit, and that's why their band is better than yours (and mine, too). Best lyrics, best song titles, best jams, great clear recording—only thing I don't like here is the front cover, but hey, you can't win all the time.

PERVERS & TRUANDS – LP + live in Lyon. May I have your attention, please? This French band features the guitarist of State Poison, and from the time I spent in that band I can tell you nothing has changed—this motherfucker just can't help turning his amp to eleven, destroying both his bandmates and their audience's ears. The comparison ends here, though. Pervers & Truand plays slowed down distorted music, they love Flipper and Brainbombs but don't sound like either, nor do they sound like grunge, but maybe a mix of all of this. They played here with Condominium from the States, who were good but sounded kinda *quiet* after P&V's set. Their record kills too, singer sounds like Gollum or a perverted Leprechaun, tempos vary from down to mid, and the whole thing was recorded by Flo from Défaite/ Télécommande/ Lexomyl, the guy who recorded the first State Poison 7" as well as other good sounding records by bands you've probably never heard of like Veuve SS, Moms On Meth or Frustros.

GUTTER GODS – LP. If someone was pointing a gun to my head, asking me what was my favorite record of 2014 so far, I'd be hard pressed to choose between this one and the Good Throb album. Year of the G's, right? To say it simply, this is some next-level shit, but just go and read the interview I did with their label Cool Death (in this very issue of *MRR* or the next one, if all goes well) to get a better idea. With bands like these it finally seems like hardcore found a way to "progress musically" without losing its raw edge or getting mixed up with nu-metal—instead it just took heaps of acid, hired a big skinhead to fuck with the audience and added a guitar sound straight outta space, thus asking the logical question, what if Negative Approach listened to a bit more Sun Ra? Sick jams from a sick planet.

GUY & MARCUS BLACKMAN EXPERIMENTATION PROJECT – demo CS. This is Marcus from UV Race (and maybe a couple other guys from that band?) playing what I can only describe as the lounge punk (!) answer to that Dave E. & the Cool Marriage Counsellors bootleg from a few years back (which BTW is probably the last 7" I'll sell when I finally get rid of all my records to pay rent when there's no more temp jobs in France). Really cool music that doesn't sound like anything else, but it's got synth and bongos and songs about weird boobs if that can help anyone.

DIE – live in Dublin. I'm just back from some holiday in Ireland, where I had the chance to see this English band tear it up in some art space that looked like a spray-painted French squat. I could say something similar to what I wrote about Gutter Gods here, minus the psychedelic shit – bands like this make one feel like the '90s "metalcore"/ Victory Records type "new school" bands were just an accident in hardcore's history, and that only now, after years of straight-up retro sounds, do we find bands sounding "modern" with sounding "like shit". I liked the DIE 7" as much as anyone who paid attention, but live they had a bunch of new (I assume) songs with more breakdowns and a more "NOW" feel, if that makes any sense.

THE #1'S – live in Dublin. My favorite band that played that night and one of the best live sets I've seen this year, The #1's were so tight and well-rehearsed that I felt lucky to see them for cheap in a small room… You know that feeling, no? Buzzcocks/ Undertones/ Exploding Hearts influenced power-pop/ punk from the dirty streets of Dublin, hits after hits and covers that you can't help singing along to (I usually hate covers, but fuck, *Oddity* by the Clean and *One Way Ticket* by the Nerves, how could one resist?) Two singles already out plus an upcoming album on Deranged Records, or so I've heard… Oh and go look at the video for their song *Sharon Shouldn't*, which is SWELL AS FUCK.

DISGUISE – live in Dublin. OK, column is late so I'll leave you with this one, another Irish band, this time playing rapid-fire distorted hardcore PONK influenced by Japan and Spain, like fuck, you know the usual suspects, a little Kuro, a little GISM, a touch of Delirium Tremens, except that there was something ridiculously hectic

(in a *good* way) in the guitar and drums playing, tons of reverb on the vocals (you may feel like this is a worn-out gimmick or something, but fuck, I'm always a sucker for hardcore bands sounding like they play in a cave), like some sped up Lebenden Toten with an aggro male vocalist and the sound of some Italian demotape from 1939-1944, maybe? When the war was on, my friends! That gig was the release party for their 7", which I regret not buying and that you can probably hear by typing some letters on a keyboard. Till next time, take it easy, don't forget to listen to the TAULARD LP if you like songs, and write to ratcharge@gmail.com if for once in your life you got something to say.

American news media portrays Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl and his apparent decision to simply walk away from the war in Afghanistan as bizarre and incomprehensible.

I wonder why it doesn't happen all the time.

From *The New York Times*: [1]

"Sometime after midnight on June 30, 2009, Pfc. Bowe Bergdahl left behind a note in his tent saying he had become disillusioned with the Army, did not support the American mission in Afghanistan and was leaving to start a new life. He slipped off the remote military outpost in Paktika Province on the border with Pakistan and took with him a soft backpack, water, knives, a notebook and writing materials, but left behind his body armor and weapons — startling, given the hostile environment around his outpost."

There's little doubt. Bergdahl was politicized by what he saw.

"The future is too good to waste on lies," a 2012 *Rolling Stone* article quotes [2] an email from Bergdahl to his father. "And life is way too short to care for the damnation of others, as well as to spend helping fools with their ideas that are wrong. I have seen their ideas and I am ashamed to even be American. The horror of the self-righteous arrogance that they thrive in. It is all revolting."

Among other traumas, the then 23-year-old Idaho native witnessed an Afghan child run over by a US Army vehicle. [3] His fellow soldiers, he recalled, didn't seem to care.

The *Times* paints a portrait of a soldier who was alienated, burned out and possibly a victim of PTSD. "He wouldn't drink beer or eat barbecue and hang out with the other 20-year-olds," the paper quotes Cody Full, a member of Sergeant Bergdahls platoon, in an interview arranged by the Republican Party. "He was always in his bunk. He ordered Rosetta Stone for all the languages there [in Afghanistan], learning Dari and Arabic and Pashto."

Bergdahl's walk-away echoes Tim O'Brien's allegorical 1978 novel "Going After Cacciato," [4] in which a US soldier serving in Vietnam goes AWOL, determined to walk all the way to Paris. His buddies go after him. It soon becomes clear that Cacciato's comrades are less interested in catching him than in following his example.

All military forces contend with deserters, and the United States is no exception. "Army desertion rates have fluctuated since the Vietnam War — when they peaked at 5%. In the 1970s they hovered between 1% and 3%, which is up to three out of every 100 soldiers. Those rates plunged in the 1980s and early 1990s to between two and three out of every 1,000 soldiers," according [5] to NBC News. By 2007, the fourth year of the US occupation of Iraq, the rate was up 80%, to nine out of 1,000.

450,000 US troops deserted during Vietnam.[6]

Few deserters pull a Cacciato, opting out in the combat zone. Instead, while on leave, most just fail to report back.

Given the conditions faced by many US soldiers in war zones, it's surprising that more don't lose it and take off.

Contrary to standard practice among in the West for hundreds of years, American soldiers are assigned to repeated, long combat tours without sufficient time between missions to recuperate. They are often underequipped and, as was apparently the case in Bergdahl's unit, poorly disciplined [7] and rarely given any context for their operations.

Then there's the nature of the wars themselves.

Since 1945, since they weren't authorized by Congress, every single one of America's wars have been illegal. They've all been wars of aggression—neither the Koreans nor the Vietnamese nor the Iraqis nor the Afghans posed any threat to the United States. And they've all featured aspects of what historians dubbed "total war" after World War II: combat in which civilian casualties are not regrettable accidents, but strategically considered and intentional.

When soldiers become vets, they're cast out into the streets, where many become homeless. [8]

It doesn't take long for the truth to hit home. All but the stupidest active-duty soldiers realize that they're peasant mercenaries for a cruel and uncaring empire.

Why don't more guys (and women) pull a Bergdahl? The main incentive to remain at their posts has to be the unremitting hostility of the locals—something Bergdahl no doubt experienced during five long years of captivity.

[1] www.nytimes.com/2014/06/03/us/us-soldier-srgt-bowe-bergdahl-of-idaho-pow-vanished-angered-his-unit.html
[2] www.thenewamerican.com/usnews/politics/item/18416-rice-has-benghazi-moment-over-bergdahl-s-battlefield-capture
[3] www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/13-things-you-need-to-know-about-bowe-bergdahl-20140602
[4] en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Going_After_Cacciato
[5] www.nbcnews.com/id/21836566/ns/us_news-military/t/army-desertion-percent-iraq-war/#.U5DW-C8wIew
[6] hereandnow.wbur.org/2014/06/04/bowe-bergdahl-taliban
[7] hereandnow.wbur.org/2014/06/04/bowe-bergdahl-taliban
[8]www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2014/01/16/veterans-homeless-afghanistan-iraq-wars/4526343/

God dammit *Maximum*, I've been on tour for like a week and I've been trying to devote like 40% of my brain to thinking about a column to write but the thing about being on tour is that even when you're just sitting in a car making your tour mates listen to Enabler it is fucking exhausting and you can't think of any brilliant ideas to write about. Like the only good ideas anybody ever has on tour, as far as I can tell, is to come up with the worst song your band could possibly cover. Like that's how Correspondences decided to do a metal version of "Devil Town."

But this is a book tour! So we don't even get to cover songs. The stupid idea we came up with was that okay, in order to better perpetrate the infiltration of our personal brand via the internet, our

corporate overlords at Topside Press asked me, Jeanne Thornton, Red Durkin and Casey Plett to write a tour diary they could post on their Tumblr. But you know how tour diaries are always kind of boring? We had this idea that like, what if we wrote our normal tour diary, and talked about being stopped at the border and reading with geniuses and all the normal stuff that actually happened, but to make it interesting we also just included some stuff about being hunted by the ghost of HP Lovecraft.

Red has not died in real life, but in our tour diary she has been killed by like an eldritch fish market squid or something.

Anyway, we read in Providence last night and Katrina from Groke came, which ruled. I mean, they missed most of the reading, including the horror story I read about a haunted ROM of The Legend of Zelda: The Ocarina of Time, shame, trans women, time travel and gore, but they gave me an oversized fucking gorgeous screen print of the poster they made for the show Groke played with my band Correspondences, Mother Tongue, Pitch, Margy Pepper and Ragana, which like, is one of those shows I am going to remember while I'm dying so I can die stoked. And the also gave me a flier for another show that's happening in Providence in a minute. They're both on this shiny rainbow paper that they got from some kind of educational supplies depot in Providence? I don't know, man, I feel like there's all this secret awesome punker stuff going on in Providence all the time and it rules. And also, if you're not ripping off Katrina for all your bootleg flyers, album covers and back tattoos (milkbonedampxerox.tumblr.com), what are you even doing?

I mean, maybe you are ripping off Sybil Lamb (sicknessandfilth.com), I don't know.

Sybil has a book coming out! It's called *I've Got a Time Bomb*, and it will have been released from the Topside Press Corporate Compound by the time you're reading this. I read like the first quarter of it, but then my girlfriend took my copy from me, which is messed up because she was one of the editors on it —a funny coincidence, given the large number of people employed by Topside Press Enterprises LLC, International.

Ugh, I told you I was tired from being on tour, dude. These jokes are the worst.

I guess I've told the story about how I met Sybil Lamb in these pages before, but the short version is that, like, when I was a baby and in the process of coming out as trans I went to this workshop called "The Trans Punk Perspective" at the Trans Health Conference in Philadelphia that she put on with my friend Alyssa, and like, they just made fun of each other in the front of a classroom for an hour. It was awesome. For a while she traveled around the US with a chicken, and for a while after hurricane Katrina she squatted in this house in New Orleans, and she did a bunch of other stuff. One time I moved to Oakland from New York and when I got there the house I was moving into decided to collectively go dumpster at Trader Joe's and when we got there, what do you know, there was Sybil, also dumpstering with a crew of crusties. Even though the last we'd heard she was in New Orleans, thousands of miles away.

So yeah, she's got a book coming out and I'm pretty stoked about it, I've been reading her zines for a million years and maybe you have too — they tend to be in punk house bathrooms. I think the novel is kind of semi-autobiographical, it's about this girl named Sybil D'Lye who builds the titular time bomb because she has a crush on someone, or something? I don't really know. Like I said I haven't read it, but what I can tell you is that the process of editing it made my girlfriend really fucking weird for like two months straight, and by the way they talk about it, it made everybody else at Topside Industries kind of lose their shit and turn weird, too. And even now that it's done, Tom, president-for-life and Supreme Magnate of Topside Manor, is walking around making people read it and tell him if it "makes sense." You'll probably be into it. I mean, I don't want to just be a shill for my publisher's books, but I *do* want to be a shill for my friends' books. Especially when they're geniuses or whatever.

I don't know look short column this month because tour but next month I'll write you something at least as good as the thing where Riddick and Robocop fucked each other okay? Maybe it'll rhyme, I don't know. I've got to go. *I think I hear the ghost of H.P. Lovercraft.*

By the time you read this, my mother will probably be dead.

After a 30-year on-and-off battle with breast cancer, she will have succumbed to painful tumors riddling her body and gasped her last breath…and I have every intention of being there for it. I will be holding her hard with the people who love her surrounding her and smiling so that this is the last thing she sees and hears. If you want a list of cool punk bands that everyone on the Internet is loving, whether you wear white jeans or stone-washed ones, then move on. This isn't gonna be the most posi column, but I haven't written a column in months, or written for that matter and this is why. Watching someone you love die will do that to you. Time stops. Texas is the reason. Ever been to Dallas?

I quit *MRR* mainly for this reason, to be available for her and my family. I got lucky. I have a great family. Don't get me wrong; we have had a lot of difficulty in life, but especially in getting along. I was not an easy person to love. I'm still not easy to love. But they did, we did, we loved each other despite the bullshit pressure from outside and inside. My parents loved one another despite their cultural differences. My mom was the levity in my dad's life. I don't give a fuck who you are, once you have had someone like that, making your life worth living, you don't let it go—at least…that is what I have observed.

The only reason I will be able to have these last moments with my mom is because of punk. That may sound ridiculous, but it's true. The day Permanent Ruin was waiting at LaGuardia in NYC a the very end of tour to fly home, I got a call from my dad telling me that things had gotten worse. He never asked me to come home, but when I suggested it he said, "that would be best." And he was right. I had saved money before tour by working my ass off so that I wouldn't have to work for several months when I returned. My two-week trip home to see my mother turned into two months, at which time the person who told me they would "do anything for me" and begged me to come to them as a support system, betrayed me. I got over that quicker than I imagined, because the problems I have are real, and I was able to return to SF for a month to take care of my apartment and all the mundane shit that needs taking care of before one embarks on a long journey.

My mom is still alive right now, but in the time it takes for this to hit the stands, it is highly unlikely that she will be alive while you are reading this. It's surreal and crushingly sad for me, but it's true. It's a weird place to be, but the only thing I can do is be present and enjoy the days with her that I have. I have to support my dad and brother. There is no other answer to this. There is no other decision I would make.

We, punks, most of us believe there is

no god. We hate him, we hate religion, we hate wars created by religion, and blah blah blah. It's a no brainer to some. You weren't brought up with religion, or you were taught that it was a scam, or worse…were brought up in a household that never ate meat and meditated everyday. I actually don't give a shit if your parents were hippies, but I know that here in SF USA, it typically means you are a white liberal who loves the poor, but scoffs at them if they ask you for money in front of your favorite fourth-wave coffee shop.

But for some of us who were brought up with religion, it's a hard pill to swallow. You never will. I will always be stuck in your throat making you feel guilty for the most ridiculous things, but making your sex extra awesome. As punks brought up this way, it's not so much that we believe in nothing or something else (I was around when Shelter was the shit), but when your parents admit that there is no god, that fucks you. It is cultural. I am always talking about this shit, but how many of you have slept under the photo of Pope John Paul the Second for half your life?

Whether your first image of punk was Crass, some '90s crust bullet-belt-laden cover of dying children, or a half-skin half-punk on the cross, you know that god is bullshit. So is fucking Krishna and Buddha and all that shit. Even the most orthodox White Power shitbag hates Christians, Jews, Muslims and Buddhists equally. There is no honor in hate, but when you discount culture, religion, ethnicity, class, location equally, how fucking superior are you? Well, I'll tell you…Fuck you. Take your Ayn Rand and choke on it.

But, how can you argue with someone who is happy? Even if they are a happy deluded asshole whose fantasy world is an affront to your way of life? If it doesn't bother you, what can you do? I mean, they can piss you off, but does it really matter?

This is not a "in defense of religion" column," this is a "go fuck yourself" column. Punk is for moments like the one I am having now and for the next six months of hating life and the pain that comes with it. For knowing that each moment that I have with someone I love more than myself may be the last. This is about the seething jealousy I have of people who have never experienced loss in their life and, even worse, those who attempt to talk you out of grief. This is for losing one of the three most important people in my life and how watching them suffer with an open mind and a loving heart challenges every part of the hate I feel for humanity.

This column is for every hardcore song I love and every hardcore dude that made me feel like I couldn't possibly understand. I can handle more shit than you can fuck face. For hating my ex-partner for making me doubt myself while I was caring for my dying mother. For hating all the calloused and witty remarks about cancer and using my mother's death to go for my throat because you are in a shitty band or your writing/comics/arts sucks. For the weakest pitiable insects I come across that would never be able to handle any possible conflict or moment in life when they can't be completely selfish and get away with it. Fuck you and fuck everything. I am gonna work out and fuck as much as I drink and I don't give a fuck what you think. I still hate your shitty band and if you think that my state of grief means a state of weakness: Come at me. Tougher than you. Chupale y Tragatelo.

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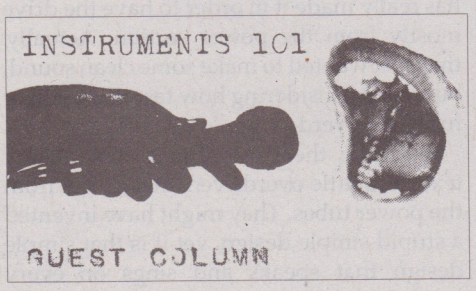
Big ups to Keskin to turning me on to Era of Fear from Thrace. You like post punk? Check them out. Thrace is a region close to Turkey in Greece so shit is always going down. Turks and Greeks with synths and dark melodies. Can't fuck with it. Less perzine next time, but I am pretty fucked up over here.



Instruments 101

Back to tube amps for this month. This might be the first in a series of columns about the history of tube amplifiers. Considering we're still trying to cover the basics of amplification let's have an overview of the most famous amplifier brands, how they sound, and why they're still on top fifty years after they were created. In order to make it easier, I'll break each brand into a geographically localized type of sound.

Before we start, you need to understand that a tube amplifier is made of two amplifying systems: a preamp section, and a power section. The preamp turns the very small current from your instrument into a bigger one. The power section turns that big current into a huge one. That's all you have to know in order to understand this column.

The British Sound by Marshall

You all know it because it's the sound of rock'n'roll. Jimi Hendrix or Angus Young anyone? Well Marshall had a major impact on rock music, and even on punk music. Most musicians you'll see, especially in the punk scene, use a Marshall amp. They went from producing some of the best amplifiers in the world to some of the worst. Their keystone amp was the Marshall JMP50, also named Plexi because of its plexiglass faceplate, which is for many guitarists the Holy Grail. In case you're wondering, JMP stands for Jim Marshall Products.

But Marshall also had a lot of other successful amps, like the well-known and much praised JCM800—most of these amplifiers are derived from the first Bassman Tweed amp produced by Fender. Importations from the US were not allowed back then in the UK, so Jim Marshall quickly decided to offer his own take on one of the American made amplifier he managed to scoop up. He built it with English components—making it somewhat similar yet different enough—and thus made the first Marshall amp ever: the famous JTM 45. JTM stands for Jim Terry Marshall, Terry being Jim's son. The most characteristic components of the Marshall sound might come from its power section. Considering how American made tubes where hard to come across back then, Jim decided to use UK made tubes. These were usually two or four EL34 power tubes, which shaped the sound of his amplifiers.

Sadly, since the late '90s Marshall has had a hard time renewing its product line, and is still producing some amps that don't really do justice to their predecessors, like the JCM 900 or JCM 2000 series.

In term of sound, if you've never really tried a real Marshall amp you're missing out on something. They have some typical sounds that you won't find elsewhere, and love being overdriven by distortion pedals.

Associated speaker: Celestion 12" Greenback.

The American Sound aka the Tweed, Black Face, and Silver Face Sound by Fender

Well, if there's one guy you have to show some respect for it has to be Leo Fender. This guy potentially defined what the guitar amplifier should be. He was the one and only person to firmly believe that his amps could be sold all around the world and become a huge commercial success. Many designs he created back then are still considered a serious base for many, if not all, amp makers today.

There are three important steps during Fender's amp production. He started with small combo amps that were covered with cloth and looked like furniture. That's the Tweed era. All these amps were minimal, and had very few options, but all were very innovative at the time. As written above, Jim Marshall would have sold drums for the rest of his life if it wasn't for the Bassman Tweed Leo Fender.

In order to improve its whole amplifier line Fender decided to change and upgrade all his amplifiers, and through this was born the Black Face saga. They are to this day some of the most played, heard, and recorded amps ever. You've probably heard a Deluxe Reverb Black Face many times in your life without really taking notice.

Leo Fender decided to sell his company to CBS after his doctor told him he had cancer and only had a couple of months to live. Of course, the doctor was wrong, and he stayed alive for many more years, but the company was already sold. Following the sale, CBS took the company to a whole different level, upgrading (or downgrading to some) the whole line to the Silver Face series. Each of these names refers to the cosmetic aspect of the amps. Tweed amps are covered with tweed-like cloth. Black Face have a black control panel, and Silver Face have a metal one. There were also a couple of in-betweens, like the Blonde or Brown series, which were covered accordingly with a blonde or brown tolex.

Believe it or not, Fender's imprint on guitar and bass amplification has changed the face of music for ages, as much as Marshall changed the face of rock'n'roll. Fender's whole amplifier line is so important that I'd need an entire column to only tell you about the most important and famous Fender amplifiers. You just have to remember that the crucial point that defined what we could call the American sound is a pair of two 6L6 tubes used in the power section, as opposed to Marshall, which used two or more EL34 tubes.

There is not a single way to define the Fender sound, but have a listen to Neil Young's "World On A String" and you'll hear the sound of a Fender Deluxe 5E3 Tweed amp. Want to hear a Deluxe Black Face? Well Chris Isaak's "Wicked Game" is perfect for that. It's a fact that Leo's legacy still lives today in many songs we've grown up with.

Associated speaker: Jensen Alnico P12, or P10 series.

The Liverpool Sound by Vox

Heard the solo from "Bohemian Rhapsody" on *Wayne's World* anyone? That's the Liverpool sound, which is also the BEATLES sound. If you listen to the three first THE JAM records, you'll hear what Vox amps really sound like. Well, this brand is still producing the same amps it's been producing since day one. There's the AC4, the AC15 and the AC30, and that's it. They had their take on solid state amps, and a couple of other things, but we'd better forget about those forever.

I still wonder myself why, but these amps got themselves a reputation of being very clean, and loud amps. Well, loud they are for sure. An AC30—which, as its name implies, is 30 watts—could easily fight against a 50 watts Marshall and win hands down. But clean? Not a single time, my friend. See these amps are a little different. Most amplifiers could be defined by the tubes they use in their power amp section. As we've seen previously, the US sound by Fender is made out of 6L6 power tubes, and Marshall made the magic happen with EL34 power tubes. Vox took some other path, and designed its amplifier line around EL84 power tubes.

When I say they designed their amps around these tubes I really mean it. Marshall and Fender amps have their sound, color, and drive from the preamp section, but Vox has really made it in order to have the drive mostly from the power section. Actually, they just wanted to make some clean sound, but failed considering how fast EL84 power tubes are overdriving.

Basically, the Vox sound is that creamy texture, a little overdriven, that comes from the power tubes. They might have invented a stupid simple design, yet it is that simple design that speaks and sings on every single move of your playing style. You have to try one to understand how good these are. The Vox AC15 is by far one of my all times favorites.

Associated speaker: Celestion 12" Alnico Blue.

The Leeds Sound by Hiwatt

Man, I wouldn't want to have crossed paths with Pete Townshend when, back in the day, he played for THE WHO. This guy must have been a real pain to deal with.

Never enough! It wasn't ever enough to him. Whatever Marshall did, Townshend would smash it with his guitar. And he tried them all. Every single amplifier, but none of them pleased him. So, he found this little amp maker from the Sound City instrument shop named Dave Reeves, and he said to him: "See Dave, I need 100 watts, no less. Like Marshall did for me, but I need it loud, and very, very clean, even at its maximum volume." And then Reeves did it, just the way THE WHO's guitarist asked for it. It turned into his signature amp, no less.

As with Vox, this strange phenomenon happened again. People think that these Hiwatt amps are supposed to sound like a Marshall. That's completely wrong. What we enjoy from the Marshall amps is the overdriven sound from the preamp. But as Pete asked for, these are totally loud, and very clean tube amplifiers. Of course they are British amps, so it's not a surprise that you'll find four EL34 power tubes in them, but if you ever have the chance to try a Custom DR103 you'll notice that they are a thing of their own.

Associated speaker: Fane 12" speakers.

The Californian Sound by Mesa/Boogie

Worst name ever, isn't it? Who could have come with a stupider name than Boogie, other than Carlos Santana? Yes, we are not talking about the metal-oriented amplifiers from that brand. We will stick to the original series that the Rolling Stones purchased no less than forty-two copies of. I'm talking about the Mark I. The amplifier that Santana said, "Man, this thing really boogies." And then came the ridiculous name, but whatever.

Typical scenario: an amp builder got stuck in a shed for too long. The guy is bored, decides he'd just tweak a small Fender combo a friend gave him to fix, and then that was it. The other guy got his amplifier back with so much distortion from it that he wasn't bummed at all. Actually they were all shocked by the sound coming from it.

Randall Smith, founder of Mesa/Boogie, pretty much invented what we call *cascading gain*. He managed to push the level of distortion further than any amp could produce, and that's pretty genius of him. After Fender decided they had enough spare parts to sell him, he started cloning the small amps he was selling at his shop. Soon he formed Mesa/Boogie, and launched what he would later call the Mark I.

Randall walked the line of Leo Fender using 6L6 tubes for its power section. Please, remember that the Rolling Stones never purchased any of their amplifiers in their whole career beside the ones they started with. But they paid for not one, nor two, but forty-two of these. That's really something, isn't it? Maybe you could have a listen to "Start Me Up" as recorded by these lads, in order to figure it out for yourself?

Associated speaker: Electro-Voice Pro Audio 12" speakers.

If you want to go further into this topic you should check out *Amped*, a book written by Dave Hunter. It might be the

perfect place to start in order to understand the tube amps history and chronology. This book is full of cool pictures to look at.

That's it! Now you're mastering some of the most famous amp makers. In another column, we will focus on tubes. As you can see they play an important part on forging the sound of every tube amp. You'll learn how they work, how to replace them, and which are the most common tubes you'll find in your amplifier.

Until that, don't be afraid, pick an instrument and start your own band. Hate mail, questions, or further explanations goes to: instrumentsoneohone@gmail.com
PS: If you're into bands like Infest, No Comment, and such, you should check out Sevices. Just search for "Sevices - Demo 2014," and you might be served. Awesome band I've seen a couple of times, and they blew me away.

It's a pretty disgustingly hot week here in Ohio. Days like these I can't do much without a Polar Pop in my hand. I'm writing this the day before it's due because I'm a fucking loser. SPLASHIN' SAFARI just got back from a pretty inefficient trip out to Philly and is getting ready to drive overnight to play the Not Normal Showcase in Chicago.

Between all that and a stupid amount of working, all that I really have left keeping me going are some wild tapes and records I just picked up. At the moment I am spinning the new slab of wax Oakland's YI just released. We hopped on their gig at the Legion of Doom last week knowing little to nothing about them and couldn't have been more psyched. Live, they were spastic and disgusting and presented their talents with a generous amount of energy to say the least.

Their music is simple and noisy. It lathers on layers of distortion and little else. While I think their aesthetic at face value is very psychedelic and garage influenced, the more I listen to their 12" *Crying* the further their music ventures from such. Their fondness for driving riffs shows in numerous ways, some heavy and metallic sounding songs, some very grungy-pop-esque songs, and then broken snare noisy punk in the styling that hints of a TOXIC STATE sound. All of this is presented with an obscene amount of guitar gibberish. The vocals are mumbled throughout the record and the whole thing ends abruptly. This record has a piece of paper glued on the sleeve and hand painted wording on top of it. It lacks the face value "wow factor" so many bands have at the moment but has the sincerity and stimulating qualities so many records lack. (yipunx.bigcartel.com)

Next up we have a tape that I find to be a true gift to Midwestern "fuckheads" and "mutants" all over these fucking states. In states like Indiana and Ohio you can't be choosy with the kinda idiot bullshit punk and hardcore you like. If you are, you just don't end up at shows. Finally though, Indiana has been blessed with a band that can show us where the unity is. That is no other than RUSSIAN TOP GUN! RUSSIAN TOP GUN just released a ten-song tape titled *Zero Judgement Crew* or *Welcome to the Fucking Future* (a reversible J-card leaves you with options!). The first title track "*Zero Judgement Crew*" is a youth crew mosh number that has all your five-panel-hat tattoo kids shouting, "If I see you judging, I'll knock your lights out." Then it sputters around chaotic punk songs with an obvious nod to the DEAD MILKMEN, songs about babies being scary, turtles finding the sea, and being born to ride a specific jet ski. Then you end up at the second title track "Welcome to the Fucking Future" as it creeps into a spoken word part that leaves an unwelcome lump in your throat. You get a rather cold welcome as RUSSIAN TOP GUN "turns your expectations (of the future) on top of your head." The next two songs are angry and fast ones about giggling and a summer driving an ice cream truck. Lastly, you have the final track "Dutch Blitz (Remix)" which shows off the band's love for '90s alt pop garbage and an ugly amount of extremely echo-y vocals. It ends in a raw noisy splat, then plays a portion of the tape in reverse quickly and stops. This release is such a blessing for us Midwestern dummies because it takes the silliness we have become known for and spits it out in a way that fits with almost every band playing and every slam-dancing, pogo-arms-crossed fiend that ends up in the crowd for at least one song. RUSSIAN TOP GUN judges no one and pleases everyone, just what we need! (uglybumprecords.bandcamp.com)

In Philadelphia you see a kid in a VOID shirt on every street corner and the stack of tapes I ended up with during our stay showed nothing, but the good that can come from such a demographic. The tape I'm most psyched about is a pretty unhinged hunk of plastic by West Philly band NEW CRIME. It's fast and takes the obvious attempts at being pogo-able and deranged. It does a good job at it, too. I think NEW CRIME makes a lot better effort of being tight and fast than most bands of this fashion. It at least makes a conscious effort to be more fast and danceable than others? It really makes my boots move, I'll tell you that! The vocals are fast and screeching, some real throat-wrecking shit. It is sure to leave the "slammers" with a smile. We played with a band that was made of members of NEW CRIME, the STASI and the HOLIDAYS, and let me tell you, they had that stupid quality I look for in bands. COOL LIFE has honed the simplistic punk style to a fault and works very hard to make it obvious that they don't give a fuck. The catchy riffs and punk drums become merely background music though as you watch king of the knuckleheads Jim Shomo flail around with a megaphone on his head screaming "All my friends are homeless, they all have homes" at the uninterested audience for five minutes. I'm going to say COOL LIFE is one of my favorite bands I've seen in a while. Not because they were really on point, or they had a demo I was really into, but because they just were too weird and stupid to understand unless you are face to face with it. Ain't that what punk is all about?

Next up on my list of duds is Iowa City post punkers XEROX. Iowa City has released some of my favorite shit in the past few years. SOLID ATTITUDE, NERV, los VOLTAGE, and SUPER SONIC PISS all proved to me there is something wrong about that town that I can really get down on. XEROX proves that further. I mean it has members of SOLID ATTITUDE, los VOLTAGE and NERV?? With that you can take guesses as to what they might sound like that wouldn't completely wrong. The drums are solid, the guitar is windy and the vocals are whiny. But unlike their other bands, XEROX is rather slow and at times rather easy-going. This is a record that I think is going to slowly sink in to my stale brain cells real nicely. With equal parts punk, rock'n'roll, new wave, and post punk, XEROX slips into the un-describable (at least for me), giving it that curious feeling that makes me want to keep getting demo tapes and digging through dollar bins. I hear everything from KITCHEN AND THE PLASTIC SPOONS to CHIRSTIAN DEATH in this

band, but describing them as either is very misleading. It creeps around, giving nods to just about everything. This record is interesting, catchy, and different. It leaves us with nothing to do but thank the *Bloodstains Across the Midwest* comp, DEVO demos, and then like NEIL YOUNG or something? I don't know just peep it already. (xeroxmusic.bandcamp.com)

That's all I got this month. Hope I didn't say anything too ridiculous! Please send me your band's demo, or your uncle's band's demo. Just send me the weirdest tape you have and I'll send you all the quality crap I can.
emmyeatsbutts@gmail.com

"Just To Wake Up Tells Me, "Hell, I Must Be Brave"

Dyeing my hair has saved my life, and more than once. No joke. This is not some Tom Robbins rip-off magical realism diatribe. Sadly, this is going to be a bit heavier than that. This is your official trigger warning, this column is going to be a downer. More specifically, this is about suicide.

I have not really ever written about the topic, which is shocking considering my experiences on the subject. You see, I suffer from Major Depression which unlike most seem to think, is not just having terrible luck or being a downer. For no logical reason at all, sometimes I am consumed by a blanket of sadness that chokes all the positivity out of me. Accompanied by that is a constant nagging thought that I should give up on living. This has been a constant in my life since sophomore year of high school. It's basically a full time job, attempting to focus on living, instead of dying.

As time has gone on, I have began to realize my subconsciously laid survival plans have been really creative and efficient over the years, as proven by my being alive. To get it out of the way, I have tried to kill my self. Twice. Once, I got very close.

A topic I care deeply about is "Radical Self-Care". Radical Self-Care is about learning to manage mental health issues by using various tips, tricks, actions, or activities to minimize suffering, or reduce the effects of trauma and anxiety. What makes it radical is that these plans are always with a baseline acceptance of a harm reduction approach. This means that sometimes, doing something that may be negative could actually lower stress or trauma in a bigger way than avoiding a negative behavior (like doing drugs to stave off withdrawal for a night, or stealing food so one does not go hungry). Since I have been dealing with crushing depression and suicidal thoughts for well over a decade I have learned many ways to survive. As a long term and overarching plan, I try to stay as busy as possible; basically to out-pace my depression. I may not be able to out-run my love of tacos but I can usually out-pace my sadness.

To come back to my opening statement here, I must comment on how huge an impact dramatically changing one's appearance is. Nearly every piercing I have I got soon after either a very negative event like a breakup, or in the onset of a depression spell. Usually the distraction of a new pretty wound to tend to does the trick. But completely changing your hair in a wild way is such a brilliant feeling.

This is why when I am really scraping the bottom, I start to make some hair destruction plans. I truly do take my feelings out on my hair. And it's the perfect crime. Hair grows back, can be re-dyed, cut, shaped, bleached, and curled in to nearly anything you can imagine. This process also takes a lot of concentration and many hours. All more reasons that when I am taking mental stock of the biggest knives in the house, I know I have the perfect escape plan. To add to the convenience, hair coloring materials are really, *really* cheap if you know what you're doing.

I made the connection about my self-harm avoidance strategies when talking to various friends about dealing with major depression. Each of us seemed to have go-to activities that at the very least distract us from ourselves. It also helps explain why so many people who suffer from mental illness are attracted to body modifications and cutting. I never cut because I am very squeamish about filleted flesh but I started piercing myself in grade school. While the physical pain of these events is both stressful and exciting, it's the feeling of accomplishment that really enacts the greatest affect. When I am wondering why I still want to be on this earth, I feel my swollen cheek and remember that I made it through that piercing and now have a gem or jewel to mark the event. Remembering the hours spent bleaching and burning ones scalp to wash it turquoise or violet is a terrific source of adrenalin and excitement.

I quote the Git's song "Second Skin" to start this essay because aside from it being a solid tune, those lyrics epitomize what my body mods, dyed hair, and tattoos are to me. My second skin. The thing I cannot break free of. Something to hold me tough. Damned angels, I love that song!

I wanted to write about the relationship between body modifications and depression because I feel they are both so misunderstood in such similar ways. Ignoring the fascists who think body mods are just for freaks (not that that's wrong) the most common questions about my piercings and tattoos are: "Did that hurt?" "Why would you do that to yourself?" "Won't that leave a scar?" All these questions completely ignore the fact that I may enjoy the fact that they will leave scars, or that I might enjoy the fact that they make me look weird. It's affirming to look in the mirror and see a timeline of what I have been through in such a visual way. Similarly, when talking about mental health many people say things like " well, we are all depressed", or "Why can't you just be happy?" These questions again ignore my agency and experience. If I knew how to be happy, do you think I would choose to be uprooted by my own mind and emotions, at random times and in random places? I know a lot about a lot of things, but I always try to remind myself that I know nothing about how someone feels unless I actually listen to the words they say actively. Our culture very much devalues empathy and active listening, and I feel it is crucial to any radical movement to fight this issue full on.

I am writing this now because it's been over a year since I bottomed up a bottle and a load of pills and most people in my life don't know about it. The stigma surrounding suicide and mental health is so pervasive and unforgiving. I didn't even tell the hospital staff while I was potentially dying because I was already too scared of how they would treat a trans woman. To clear the air, I did not have an allergic reaction to a medication. I sent a load of poison to my kidneys and they stopped working. I spent eight days in the hospital lying to nurses, friends, family, and myself about what was going on. That wave of inspiration similar to starting a new year lasted a good while, but despite making radical changes to my life in positive ways, I still battle with serious mental health issues. I don't think that will ever change. So I will learn all the tricks I can to stay alive and treat others as kindly

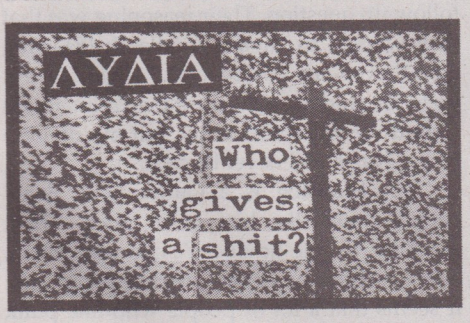
and empathetically as I can. Empathy is the keystone to healthy communication and understanding. Period. The removal of empathy as a priority in our society is one of the reasons capitalism thrives.

My point here is don't be an asshole and think about the words people say to you and really listen. If you're not ready to full on change the way you interact with the world, at least take a pause every now and then to think about a confrontation you plan to have soon. Analyze your motives and the outcome you hope for. Then choose your actions and words deliberately, and not overrun with emotion.

When someone tells you something heavy, think about a circumstance where you may say the same thing to someone else. When someone tells you they are depressed, most people would rather hear "That fucking sucks," than "Me too" to be honest. Listening is often a one-way street, don't wait to speak, but instead plan to be silent. It's one of the best gifts you can give someone who is hurting.

This past February marked the one year anniversary of my "Waking Up Alive". It was one of my hardest days in the Bay. To others, touching up my roots and a long bath sounds like a small feat but I can promise you, it was quite an impressive evening in my mind, and like every time before, I am more than not, glad to be alive.

Sidenote: Aren't you assholes proud of me for resisting the constant urge to make a dyeing=dying pun. That was a tremendous exercise in self-restraint!



The BBQ place on the corner of Divisadero and Grove used to be called Da Pitt. It was a dinky old place that made great barbeque and had been around for years (OK, it might have also been a cover up for dirtier business). Now instead there is a new BBQ place, that has no smoke coming from its chimney, with pic-nick tables and chairs occupying half the parking lot, the other half of which belongs to one of the few weed dispensaries left in the city. Across from that now, instead of the plant store that used to be there, is a bougie restaurant, (apparently with a great mescal catalogue, but who gives a shit about that) which has adjacent to it a big ass garage, which, in true gentrification style, has also been turned into a day-time eating and drinking establishment. So. You have rich ass white people eating *in a parking lot* expensive ass meat, across from a place where more rich ass white people sit *in an open garage* drinking expensive ass cocktails as they watch the World Cup. On Sundays there is farmers market where all these people flock to, to buy $8 juices and $3 avocadoes (each!). Up the road, real estate developers purchased a giant Victorian house built in 1900, which once used to house a church, for $1.4 million, 40% over the asking price! Meanwhile, rent is rising to astronomical prices around the whole city (average rent right now is over $2,900), and typically cheaper neighbourhoods are rapidly filling up with middle-income tenants, who still basically earn more than you or I could make in a decade. And, much like Brooklyn being the cheaper solution to Manhattan-workers, Oakland is now also being overrun by techie yuppies. So not only did they push people out of SF, they are spreading like a disease, pushing people out of Oakland now too. Soon the whole Bay will be theirs and that whack-job who wants Silicon Valley to be its own independent state might just get his wish. But who gives a shit?

In a similar act of absurdity, whole favelas in Brazil have been demolished to make way for new stadiums and sporting grounds in light of the current FIFA Soccer World Cup and 2016 Olympic Games. I know how that is. Greece hosted the 2004 Olympics, and it's all just one giant embezzlement scheme to put money into the pockets of the few, covering it up as "public benefit works," lying to our faces. Of course a chunk of those facilities has been left to rot, empty and rusting. Meanwhile, the amount of people who can't afford housing anymore in Greece is rising. Empty buildings, people without a home— the state can put two and two together, they just don't give a shit. These blood-sucking fucks have spent *millions* on the World Cup; they know that when one doesn't have clean water, electricity or even a place to sleep, having a 46,000-capacity soccer stadium is exactly what the people need! They sent *boats down the friggin' Amazon* to get the materials to a town you can't even get to by land (that doesn't even have its own soccer team!) to make a stadium just for this FIFA-extravaganza sporting fiasco. The definition of deliberate futility. Capitalist exploitation in all its glory. But of course we are all posers and still watch the games on TV, instead of massively boycotting FIFA and its evil government-backed corporate-ass-licking scum. But hey, it's just good ol' sporting fun, right, who gives a shit?

So, it's print week, we're putting together the whole magazine, I'm finishing up my late reviews, people are working on layouts and Diana hands me a letter. It's from USPS. To send out the magazine to our international distributors we use ISAL, which is the International Surface Air Lift service. We have to drive to the airport each month, go through security checks and into multiple offices, fill out all this paperwor, and it's basically a pain in the arse, as most things National Security are. So, each country we ship to has a different code. Apparently we'd not been using the right codes, something we were unaware of, since 2011. This lead to a financial discrepancy, which they decided only now, three years later, to notify us of. *And* they demand we send a check for the financial deficiency in 30 days! I know USPS is struggling financially, and maybe they're debt-collecting left, right and centre, but if they are auditing little corporations like *MRR* that just manages to break even each year, then they must be in real fuckin' trouble.

The second of the Three Strikes of Unluck (they always come in threes, hear you me) was when we got a hand-delivered notice last night stating that our rent was going up by $415 per month, effective August 1st. This will total our rent to $5,660 per month. (Gasp if you will) Add to this our print bill, which approximates to $3,800 – $4,000 per month, our electricity, gas, water, phone/internet and waste disposal bills (roughly $450 a month), plus ~$400 or so every couple months for packaging materials and office supplies, (mailers, boxes, packaging tape, printing paper, etc.), the monthly staples of toilet paper and shitworker coffee (because dozens of punks come through here every week), plus quarterly or yearly registered costs, like our PO box, our postage meter, our resellers permit, and last but not least, our taxes.

If you can't be bothered to do the math, that's over 10K a month in combined expenses, which we have to hustle day and night to cover. *MRR* has no rainy day fund. Not because no one ever thought of it, but because we barely break even each month, let alone have money left at the end of the month to put aside. If we do make any extra cash, it either goes straight back to the people who have generously loaned *MRR* money over the years, or it goes on funding other projects to help *MRR* stay financially afloat, such as the Los Crudos discography we are about to work on. A Savings Account has been set up because the prospect of having to move is no longer just a scary item on our "to look into" list, it's a scary reality we now wake up to every morning. We all worry about how we will manage to cover the immense costs of moving 30 years of history and 46,000 records, but hope that with the help of our all volunteers and readers, we can ensure

that our favourite zine and one of the oldest and most influential punk institutions in the world, doesn't end up homeless! Because much like when the gang was trapped in the trash compactor in *Star Wars Episode IV – A New Hope*, we feel like the walls are closing in on us—fast. So, I'm waiting to see what the Third Strike will be and preparing for the worst. Watch this space for updates.

Moving on to another item on the list of Shit That Pissed Me Off This Month, I want to discuss something that preoccupies some punks but maybe not enough of them: sensationalizing / misappropriating fascism. First let's get those little definitions out of the way. Sensationalize: verb; to present information in a way that is intended to provoke public interest and excitement, to increase viewership or popularity at the expense of accuracy. Misappropriate: verb; to dishonesty or unfairly take for one's own use.

How these two concepts merge? I'll tell you. When a magazine sells Totenkopf (skull) buttons and T-shirts with swastikas, or a band uses the Celtic cross in its logo or the Odin Rune (or Norse Rune) in its poster, this is sensationalizing swastikas, it's misappropriating Totenköpfe. In their effort to be "edgy" and "shock the squares," all these provocateurs manage to do is demean the horrors that millions of people wen through thanks to the monsters operating under these same symbols.

For some fortunate enough to have never directly experienced the results of fascism, Nazis have taken on an illusory mythical dimension, distorted by underground culture (pop fiction, grindhouse movies, punk, gangs, hooligans) the passage of time and the collective ability to ignore and eventually forget… Unless someone pops that bubble for ya. Running from neo-Nazi worms *and* neo-Nazi cops three years ago during the massive annual anti-fascist march in downtown Athens will do that to you. Perhaps to those removed enough, fascism is something "exotic" or "cult," like the Yakuza, or the Hells Angels. The difference is that if you came across these groups (or their enemies) while sporting their colours you'd probably get a fractured scull rrreal fuckin' fast!

Given the general rise in extreme right parties around Europe, and the rise of "dumb punk" it's no surprise really that the spineless worm ideology might crawl its way into certain punk heads. In so many punk scenes it is such a given that fascist sympathizers or neo-Nazi supporters are absolutely not tolerated, it almost seems absurd that in the year 2014 we'd have to point out why fascism is a deep rooted problem. This is not to say that white power flirting skins and meatheads don't exist in some scenes, just that not all of them manage to infiltrate it, let alone coexist without being questioned. So, when I see bands that use these fascist symbols actually be a part of an established punk scene and get away with it, I think, "How the hell did that get past so many punks? Don't they have something to say about this? Don't they care? Do they even know?" After all, knowledge is power.

I won't claim to know how it is elsewhere, but in Greece punk and politics go hand in hand, so there is absolutely no way a band that flirts with fascist, white power or neo-Nazi notions would be given space or the time of day. What is most likely is they'd get their ass handed to them on a souvlaki stick.

This issue came up yet again the other day, while I was editing the interview submitted to us with Cool Death Records. I will say right off the bat, that this is not about the label, or even the guy fronting Gutter Gods. It's about the moral of the story. So, I was editing the interview and read that this chap Allan aka Meatdog also sang in Reckless Aggression. I couldn't remember why but a little flag shot up in my brain. I did some research and confirmed it: That's the skinhead who wrote some pretty shitty things about one of the Krömosom guys. I did some more digging and realized fast that I found this guy's opinions pretty questionable. And I knew *MRR* readers would too, were they to do a quick internet search like I did.

So, I emailed the label to ask them what they think. I said: "As the current and only content editor right now, I am responsible for what gets published in the magazine. This means that I have to be able to defend and stand by what goes to print, and there are questions that have come up regarding Gutter Gods, and more specifically their frontman, Meatdog.

Meatdog has already gained an amount of controversy surrounding his actions, and there are certain connections which readers can and will make, if they haven't already about his "sketchy" a-politics, his use of sexist and fascist imagery in his artwork and his derogatory use of words such as "gay" and "faggot."

Also, while his involvement with Reckless Aggression (a band whose name is taken from White Noise, a White Power band from Australia who released records on Rock-O-Rama, [a label] that also released Skrewdriver records) does not automatically reflect any political views Gutter Gods or Cool Death may hold, surely you can see how this glaring association will be questioned by our readers.

I want to make it clear that this is not a crusade, or an attempt to drag anyone down—there is no insidious intention to this email, merely looking for clarification to ensure a quality, in-depth interview. It's not about PC or non-PC provocative punk, people will argue on both sides. It's about asking the questions that people want answers to—that I want answers to—when using *MRR* as a platform for debate and exchange.

Some people/bands have a negative approach and like to blur the lines, defy the rules, break the norm whatever that may be, and reaction and provocation (and sometimes a fist fight) are what they want—yes, that's punk too. But in my position, to ignore the gray area where Meatdog treads would be a non-negligible omission on my part."

One of the people running the label emailed back. He said that his reply (below) is probably politer than what Meatdog's would have been. To which I say, *MRR* doesn't want polite, it wants the truth. He also said that having to offer a "disclaimer" before being mentioned in *MRR* is rather awkward. Well, if you've read *MRR* before you'd know it does not tolerate or promote sexism, genderphobia or white power bands—it actually exposes them so readers know what to expect. Whether readers then avoid, confront or simply not give a shit about it, is their issue. No, *MRR* doesn't ask for a disclaimer but it does expect you to back your shit up—any accountable publication would. Perhaps Gutter Gods or Meathead don't get asked about it much, or they just haven't had to deal with too many "PC" punks, but *MRR* has rarely brushed things under the rug.

Below is the reply they sent for print. A couple days after sending it, they asked if there would be a note or prefix to go with my follow up question. Their reasoning was that they wanted to "avoid needlessly drawing attention to any controversy." I will leave it up to the readers to decide if they think this is a controversial issue or not, but my opinion is that Nazis will never be cool.

"Yes, Meatdog is a Gutter God. Some people don't like him very much. There are some people he doesn't like very much, either. I think he enjoys stirring people up. It seems that a lot of people who like punk music do. His old band, Reckless Aggression, was named after a song by White Noise (another Australian Oi!/Hardcore band.) They wrote some pretty cool music, and it's a pretty cool name, so I can see why they thought that was a cool idea. Check them out if you dig that stuff. His old zines, *Soap Box* and *Groin Gravy*, had some pretty cool and confronting content smeared over its pages. I found it interesting and pretty cool. Check them out if you dig that stuff. He has said and done some things that upset some people. But I guess that's cool. Haven't we all? Allan Cowie is my friend. He gave me a book about Hawkwind for my birthday. He's a cool guy."

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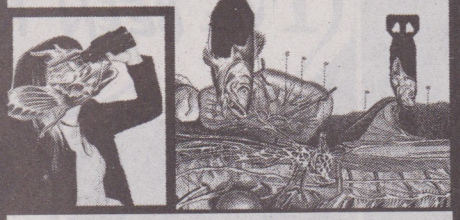

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7/28 FT. WORTH
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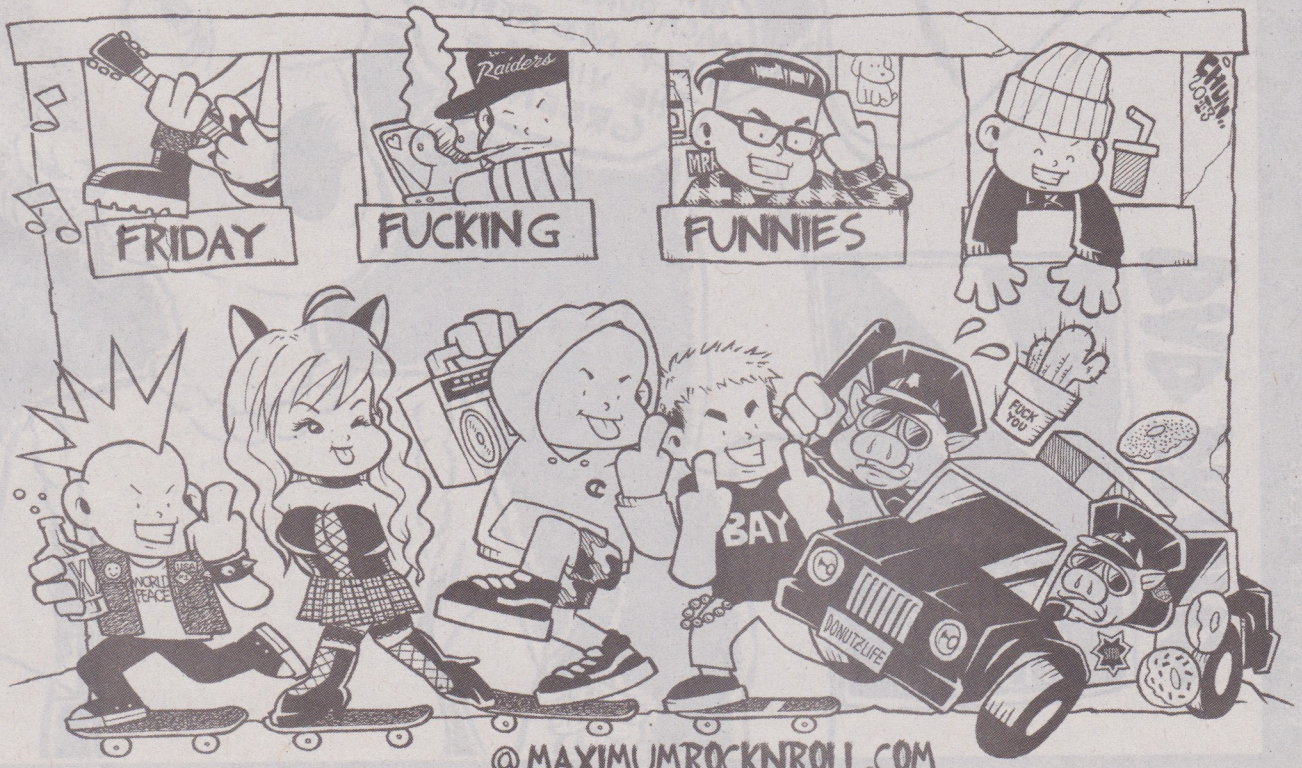

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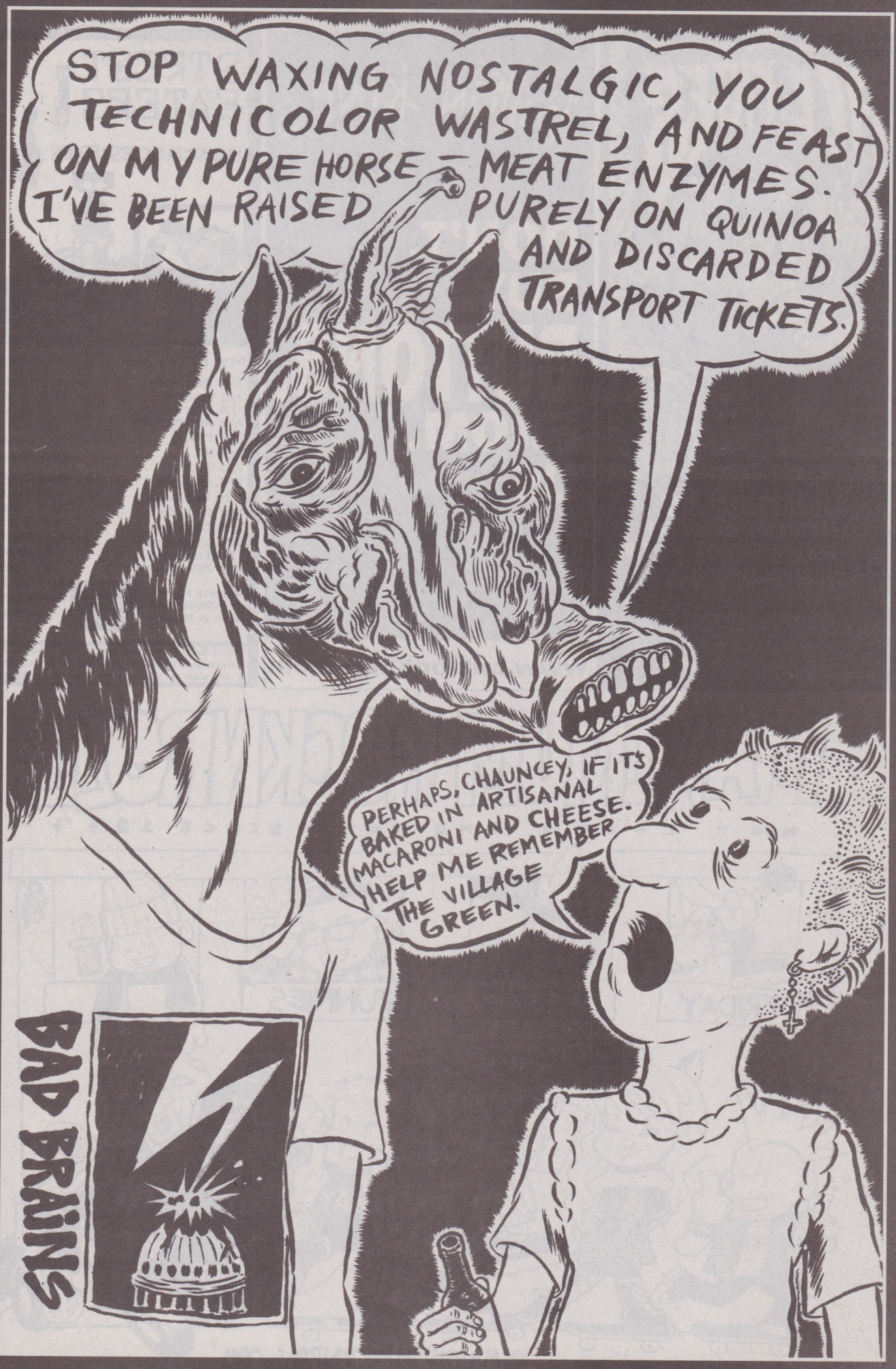
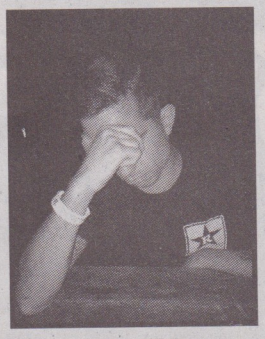


by Travis Igler

MRR asks you!

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

This month's question: "What is your show pet peeve?" Asked in between the MRR Presents show and the Warthog, Condition show in San Francisco, by Kyle Canyon.

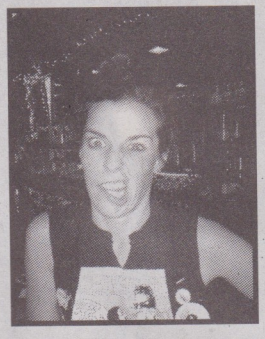


Anthony, 27, San Francisco
I don't like it when couples show up and embrace each other while the band's playing.

Micheala, 25, San Francisco
When there are no ladies in the front and it's all dudes and it's no fun.

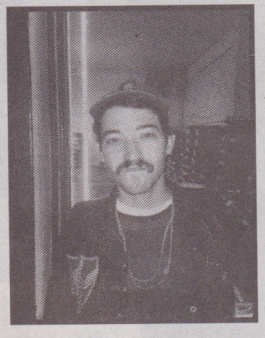
Quandax, 26, The Mission
I don't like it when singers lay on the ground when people are pitting because then it stops the pitting. Especially when the pit gets ignited; dude, let it fucking go off, ya'know?

Kendall, 23, San Francisco
When you're at a mellow to medium tempo show, and everyone's bobbing a little but there's that one person who's just going a little too hard.

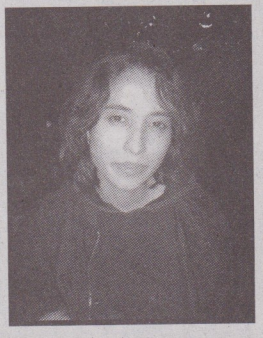


Nemesis, 28, Athens, Greece
When dudes mosh so hard you can't dance up front without getting trampled.

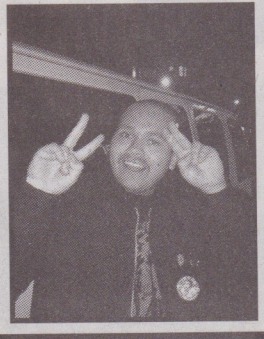
Jason, 37, San Francisco
They always start too late.



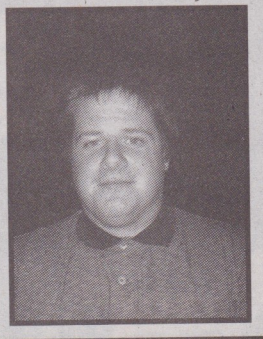
Sully, 29, New York City
Nasty bathrooms or not enough drink tickets.



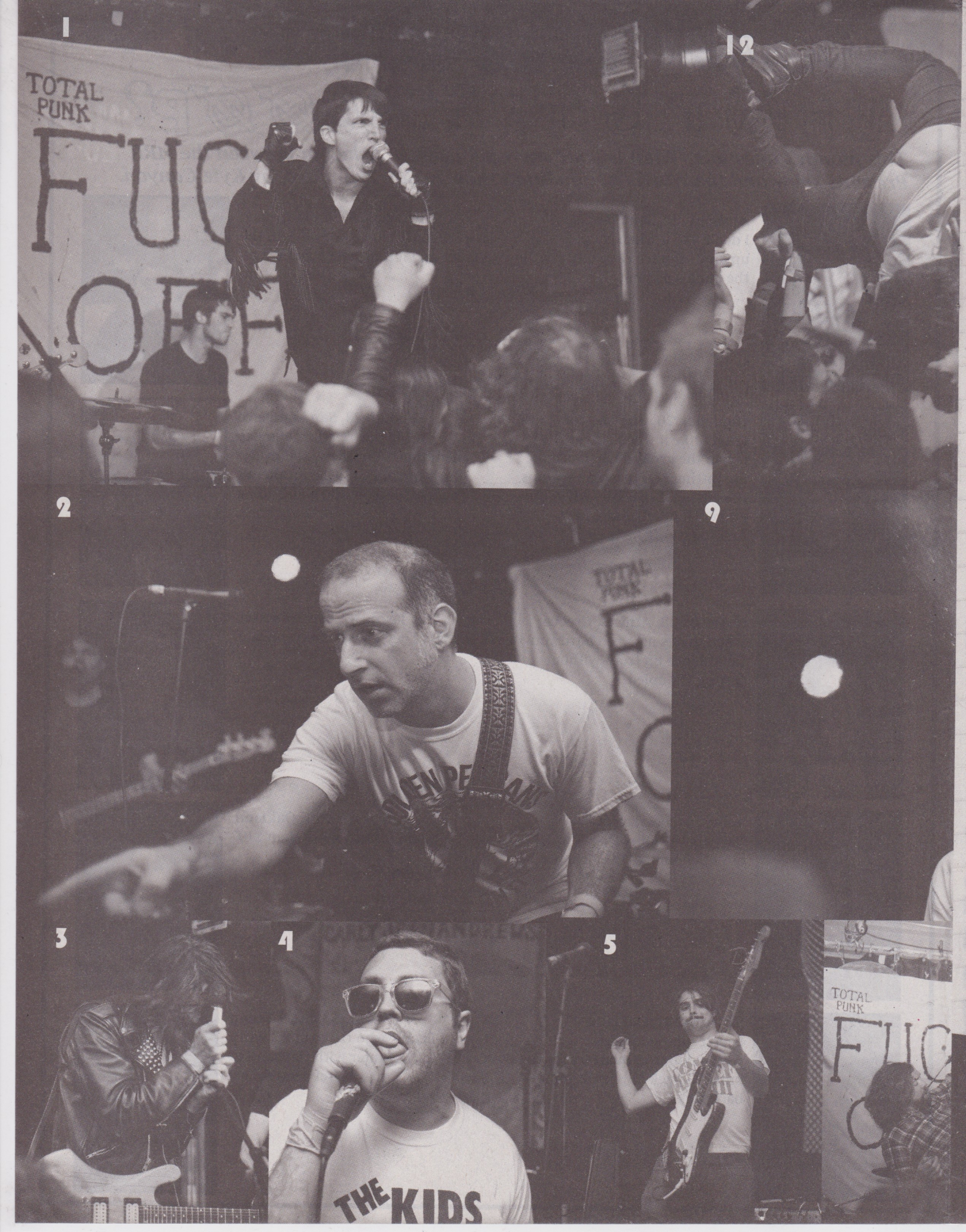
Cheri, 25, Oakland
When it costs more than $10.



Salvador, 21, Oakland
People who show up with a dollar in quarters for the door but a 12-pack of beer in their backpack.



Sean, 25, Soviet Union
People who try to make witty banter with the band in between songs.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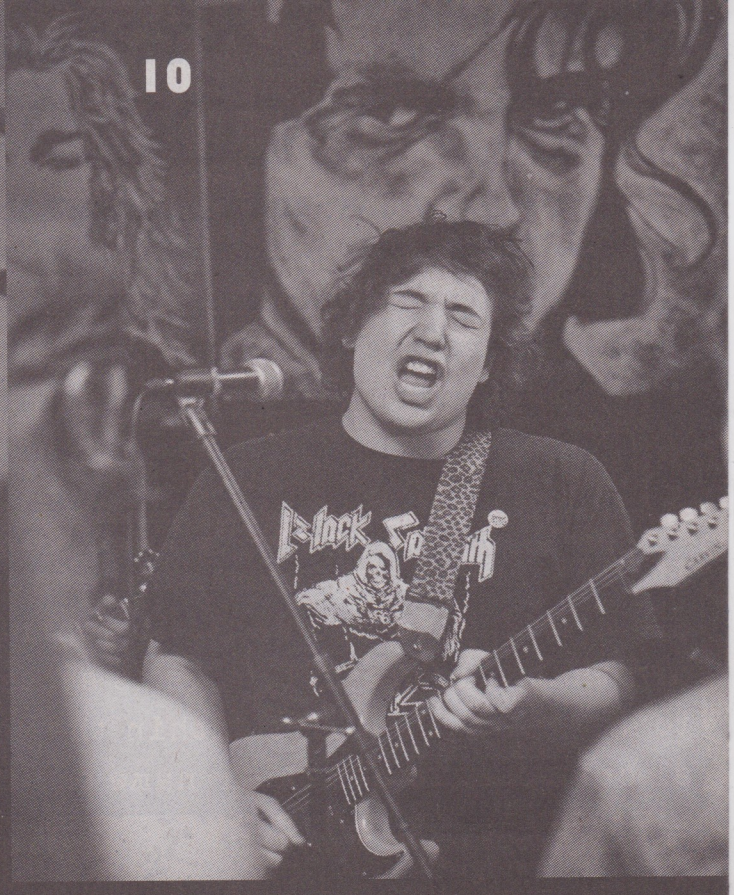


10

BY JON RUBBERNECK

1. VIDEO 2. GINO AND THE GOONS
3. GARY WRONG GROUP
4. GIORGIO MURDERER 5. LIQUOR STORE
6. LIVE FAST DIE 7. THE HEMINGERS
8. GG KING 9. GOLDEN PELICANS
by Jon Chamberlain
10. SICK THOUGHTS
11. MANATEEES 12.CROWDSURFER
by Nathaniel Smith

8

6

7

NEW BLOOD'S NOT DEAD!

Some issues were recently resolved involving our email setup for New Blood. Since none were received after February 28th, 2014, we realized there was a problem when it was verbally relayed tp us that bands were submitting New Bloods that we were not receiving in our email. Most of (we hope) the lost emails have since been recovered and we would like to go ahead and feature those bands, despite the time lapse.

It's important that the magazine is accessible to anyone who wants to contribute, and that this specific page is accessible to any band, who falls within the general criteria, to get their name out there.

What is a New Blood band?

A newer band with a demo out, one that other punks might not know about yet.

KNOW A BAND YOU THINK SHOULD BE IN NEW BLOOD?

SUBMIT!

Here are the questions asked to every band submitting to New Blood. We ask bands to try to keep their answers brief (1 to 2 sentences), and to answer as a band, not each member individually. We have fit THREE other bands and their answers, too!

NEW BLOOD QUESTIONS

1) Date & Location formed:
2) Reason for forming:
3) What are your lyrics about?
4) How would you describe your sound?
5) What is the future for this band? (this is also where you can include contact info)

Along with the answers, you'll need to submit a band shot, 300 dpi or larger (with photo credits, if available). And a logo, if you have one.

You can submit your own band, or a friend's band! OR, your can make your own... like Maak here!

DO IT YOUR FUCKING SELF!

Currently, the way it works is bands submit their completed answers, along with photo and logo directly to the new email address MRRNEWBLOOD@GMAIL.COM.

This submission-based magazine starts with YOU! You say it, we print it!

NEW BLOOD BERLIN/LEIPZIG

1) DATE AND LOCATION FORMED

2) REASON FOR FORMING

3) LYRICAL CONTENT

4) DESCRIPTION OF SOUND

5) FUTURE?

BY MAAK

MIDNIGHT CRISIS

1) sept. 2011 at zerofest (leipzig, germany), we were standing together and realized that we could be a band. first rehearshal was in may 2012 after we had many drunken talks about starting this band soon.

2) boredom, free beer, punkrock.

3) life. personal and political. we add english translation for the ones who cant´t speak finish well enough.

4) raw and easy 80s style punk/hc ufta ufta. very primitive.

5) a 7" and a split 7" with our friends xxx WHACK AND WASTED we will do a short east germany / czech - republic tour with WHACK AND WASTED in may and an europe tour in september with HASSLER. hoperully some weekend - shows in between and maybe some festivals if somebody wants us.

midnightcrisisatlive.de

supergau.bandcamp.com

1) xxxxxxxxx GAU formed in the end of 2011 in berlin, even nobody of us is originally from germoney.

2) noise, friendship and ausländer conspiracy.

3) global decay from a local perspective thru personal experience.

4) some say its like 80s uk DISORDER some say japan noise we say fukk off!

5) playing, touring, recording and repeating all this as long as we enjoy it! we are coming to get you!

EARTH IS NOT A PLAYGROUND

1) we formed in autumn 2011, berlin city.

2) allready xxxxx nearly everybody had bands allready running, and we wanted to go more primitive and noisy as the others.

3) this and that. from personal issues over ironical bullshit to stupid war and distruction issues.

4) dis-noise raw punk hardcore, the primitive way, neanderthal crust.

eartherustdisplacement.bandcamp.com

5)we release 3 splits right now on xxxxxxxxx rawmantic disasters records and one song on heartfirst records berlin comp. 7in 7 inch. more live playing...original singer has a break cos xxx becoming mother and is replaced temporaly by mario

PISS

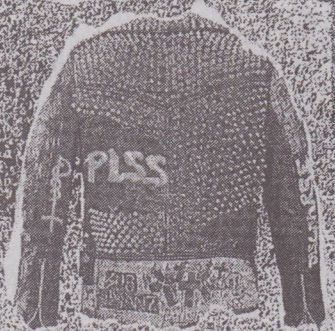
1) we started wrinting songs/ learning to play our instruments in the early spring of 2012. first gig was in the xxxxx summer of 2012. we are located in berlin.

2) just had an urgent need to fucking shred!

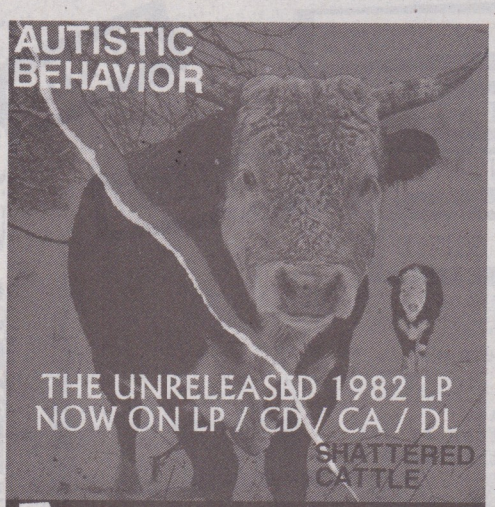
3) whatever that first comes to mind. some songs are about teenage riots and blowing up things while other have a bit more political substance like criticizing religion, the patriarchy and the system in general... most of our songs are written spontaneously on the spot.

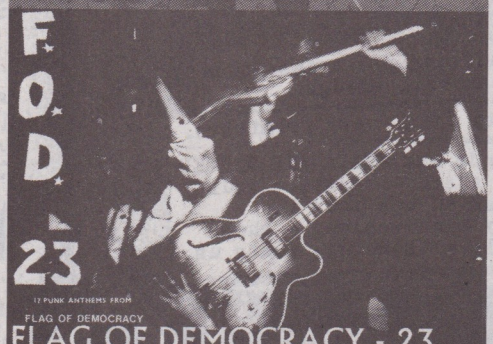
4)raw and simple hardcore. lots of xxxxx noise. we dont wanna sound like its too much of a plan, just gaaaaaarhhhhh!

5) we are going to spain in about a month (early april) for some shows with MULLTÜTE . then we would like to record and release some seven inches. we have way too many songs that xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx are not yet recorded so there should be some stuff coming up in hopefully not too long time. some more touring for sure as well.



wearepiss.bandcamp.com





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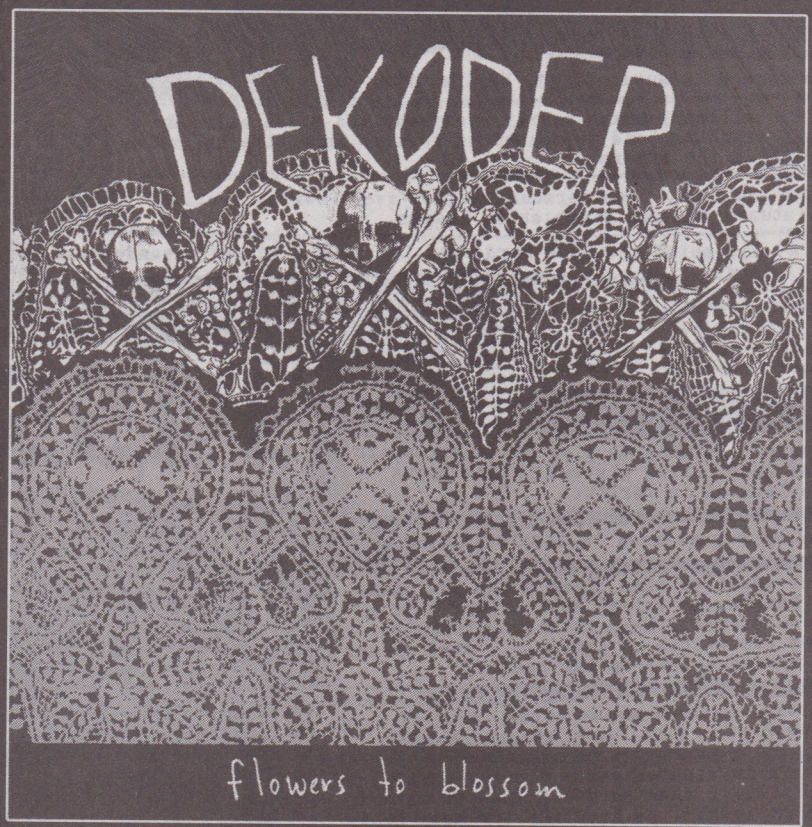

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MIGHTY FEVERS

My name is Parolone from Martesana, Italy, and I'd like to introduce you all to the greatest Japanese jetto garage punk vroom vroom band: THEE MIGHTY FEVERS. The story of my involvement with Thee Mighty Fevers is quite simple. I heard them somewhere in cyberspace and they really blew me away. As a result, I found myself feeling an uncontrollable urge to do a record with them, so I asked those crazy guys. And guess what? They said yeah...they said yeah...they said yeah yeah yeah!!! My label, One Chord Wonder, put out a split EP (with our band the Morbeats) for the Fevers, fresh on the heels of their fantastic Fuckin Great R'N'R LP on Dead Beat Records. Now, I'm here to interview them for Maximum Rocknroll. So ladies and gentleman, without further ado... Wakarimasuka? Rock'n'roll! Thee Mightyyy Fuckinnn' Fevers!!! Interview by Parolone, One Chord Wonder People's Department for International Affairs. Photos by Chierry Coulon.

Marty: vocals and guitar
Tommy: guitar and vocals
Junkie: bass and vocals
Yokkon: drums

MRR: You must be sons of Teengenerate and Guitar Wolf, right? Are there other bands or artists that have inspired you?
Marty: Yes! Both Teengenerate and Guitar Wolf are our super idols! And yes, there are a lot of other bands that we love. Personally, I love the Ramones, who walk a fine line between joking and seriousness.

MRR: C'mon don't be so lazy! *MRR* wants at least 2,000 words, and we have only 100 so far!
Tommy: OK, I'll make a list. Stooges, Modern Lovers, Johnny Thunders, Ramones, Sex Pistols, the Boys, Radio Birdman, Clash, the Real Kids, The Saints, DMZ, the Kids, Slaughter And the Dogs, Crime, the Dogs, the Dickies, Pack, Forgotten Rebels, GG Allin, Dead Boys, Buzzcocks, Sham 69, M.O.T.O, the Carpettes, Black Flag, Angry Samoans, Cock SParrer, Gang Green, Devil Dogs, the Mummies, Teengenerate, Guitar Wolf, New Bomb Turks, Jet Boys, Rip Offs, Zeke, the Sprouts, Johnny Rockets, King Brothers, Exploding Hearts, the Riffs, Carbonas, Busy Signals, Gee Strings, Dean Dirg, the Instigation, Marked Men.
Junkie: I first bought a Mummies LP because of its cover. Even now, years later, I can't forget the feeling of first dropping a needle on that LP.

MRR: At a gig in support of Deadvikings, the Morbeats forced Kensuke to sing the Blue Hearts's song "Linda Linda" with us. Kensuke has probably hated us from that day, but what do you think about the Blue Hearts? Are they really the most influential Japanese punk rock band?
Marty: Everyone knows the Blue Hearts, even those not interested in rock'n'roll or punk. Their influence is enormous!
Tommy: The Blue Hearts were still active when I was about ten years old. I listened to and sang their songs a lot in elementary school. At the time, all my classmates listened to Tokio [*Ed.* a Japanese boy band of the '90s], the worst idol band. The Blue Hearts sang, "Teacher, there are things that you can't measure by set-square!" When I heard that, I stopped studying! Nowadays, all of those guys still do their own bands; I have a lot of respect for them.

MRR: What about the Stalin, GISM, Mirrors, and other Japanese punkers?
Tommy: Of that period, I like 村八分(Murahachibu1969–1973), the Swankys, the Roosters, アナーキー(Anarchy), ピーズ (Piece), Lip Cream.

MRR: Is rockabilly an influence?
Marty: My introduction to rock'n'roll was through the rendition of "Johnny B. Goode", at the dance party in *Back to the Future*. Somehow, I miraculously found a '50s-'60s rock'n'roll collection with that song on it. That album also had Elvis, Jerry Lee Lewis, early Beatles, early Rolling Stones, the Beach Boys, etc.. I got obsessed with that sound, and that stuff remains my biggest musical influence. I still remember the moment when Chuck Berry started blasting out of my rotten speakers. Soon after, my friend loaned me a Sex Pistols record, but I couldn't help but feel that Little Richard is much more aggressive and hard!

MRR: Dead Beat Records released your LP last year. Tell us how that happened. Did you send them a demo?
Marty: We contacted a bunch of record labels, and Dead Beat replied and asked us to do the LP. To be honest, I don't remember the process too well. I don't even remember what I did three days ago!

MRR: That LP, Great Fuckin' R'N'R, sounds really good, powerful, angry and fast. How did you record it? Give us some technical details.
Tommy: I work as a recording engineer, and we recorded the album in the studio where I work. I recorded it by Pro Tools but to be honest I don't like digital sound. It's funny to me that, while we use the most advanced technology, we are actually trying sound like an analog recording. It's totally inconsistent and ironic! We record our songs by playing by playing them live. I don't mind if some sounds cover others. We like that messy, saturated sound.

MRR: That LP is really a blast. *MRR* coordinator Lydia told me to tell you that she loves the way you *always* start your songs with "1-2-3-4!" She thinks that it makes each song have more energy. Do you agree with her or are you just trying to show the world that you're able to count from one to four?
Marty: People underestimate the power of 1-2-3-4! It doesn't matter if you play music or not; it's everywhere in ordinary life. I'm always shouting 1-2-3-4! When I wake up, 1-2-3-4!

When I'm eating, 1-2-3-4! When turning the engine, 1-2-3-4! When I have time to practice guitar, I practice 1-2-3-4! Of course for sex, 1-2-3-4 Finish, finish, finish, finish! Oooopsss, shut up! Don't ask silly questions!

MRR: And after Dead Beat you did a 7"—the *Weird Affairs & Teengeneration Accidents* split with the Morbeats, on the unknown One Chord Wonder label from Italy. Are you nuts? What happened?

Marty: If there are any expectations for us, we want to do our best to meet those expectations. If there is a mountain, we'll climb. If there is a river, we'll swim. If there are panties, we'll wear them on our heads. That's it!

MRR: Tell us how you write your songs.

Marty: I have a time machine in my heart. Whenever I get a new idea for a song, I take that time machine to meet my childhood self and play him the song. If kid-me loves it, I bring it to practice.

MRR: I've heard that in Japan nobody wants vinyl today, even in punk rock. Is it true?

Marty: Well, I buy vinyl. My friends buy vinyl as well.

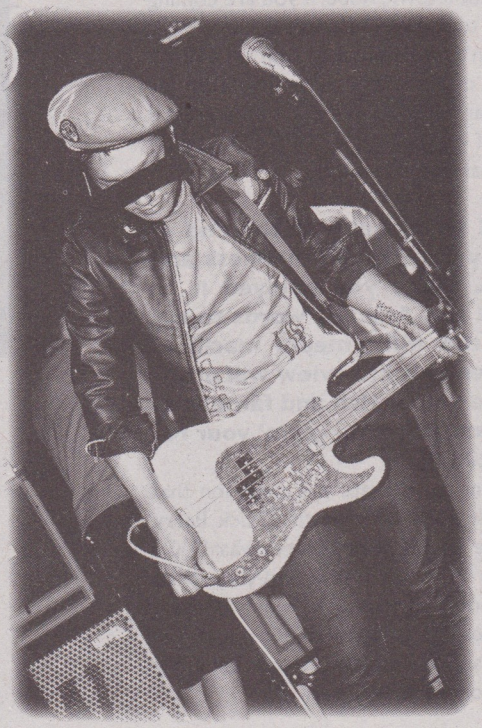
MRR: Really? How much vinyl do you have? And what about the other Mighty Fevers?

Marty: At my level, I don't count records by number, I count them by weight. I'd say I have about two African elephants worth of vinyl!

Tommy: I buy records as well. But in Japan, CDs are much more common. Most people don't own record players. Punk record shops are only in the big cities; there is no punk record shop in Kobe, our hometown. Thank god for the internet! Our only releases are on vinyl, but a lot of people ask us to release CDs! And it's true that a lot of Japanese musicians release on CD. I think this is because of the high price of producing vinyl. Only one company presses vinyl in Japan, and it's fuckin' expensive! If you press records abroad, shipping becomes too expensive, and dealing with foreign pressing plants is not always possible. As a result, most indie Japanese musicians and record labels put out releases on CD.

MRR: Tell us about your scene in Japan. Are there many people at shows?

Marty: When I was younger, the scene was so hot! Every week, there were lots of people at any and all the shows. If I compare the scene to that moment, there are not as many people. But it doesn't matter! Just go out and do as much as you can!



MRR: What about the "unity" of the scene? Do people who come to see Thee Mighty Fevers and bands like yours also go to other types of shows, for example pop punk, hardcore, rockabilly, etc.? Or are there kinds of sects?

Tommy: In the big cities, people care more about specific styles, whereas in smaller cities, genre doesn't matter quite as much. Being able to be stuck in a specific style means there has to be a lot of bands and people devoted to that certain genre. Those kinds of scenes only exist in Osaka and Tokyo—especially Tokyo. There are solid scenes in Kyoto and Kanazawa too. But we play garage punk shows and also hardcore shows. I don't think it's necessary for us to stick to one scene or genre.

Junkie: The people who go to our gigs are musicians and music fanatics. I don't think there is any separation of sub-genres here, because everyone is starving for fun.

MRR: Teengenerate has gotten back together for a couple of shows, and they even put out a movie. Do you think that this helps Thee Mighty Fevers and other newer Japanese garage punk bands?

Tommy: I'm not sure that it helps, but it makes us really happy! The Teengenerate film was the best movie ever!

MRR: You did an American tour last summer. How did it go?

Marty: We drove about a hundred kilometers every day, played shows, drank Red Bull, ate pizza, and drank alcohol. It was repetitive. But it was so great.

Tommy: In New York, we played with Livids, which is Erick of New Bomb Turks' newest band. They are fuckin' great! In Philadelphia, we touched the statue of Rocky's dick. In Cleveland, there are so many bad boys and the atmosphere felt pretty dangerous. But happily, after we played everyone welcomed us warmly, and the show was pretty awesome as well. I was pretty drunk when I met Tom from Dead Beat, so he probably thinks I'm a weirdo. In Columbus we played in the bar that's run by the member of the Feelers. It was a great venue! There is also a special story about a strip bar, but I won't tell you about it this time.

Junkie: We went to a strip bar. That's the story.

MRR: Any plans for new records? The new release will be always on vinyl?
Tommy: The Japanese label Bees Knees Records is going to release our next single. Bees Knees is the best trash rock'n'roll bar in Japan, and they just started their own record label. It's in our hometown, Kobe. If you are coming to Japan to tour, it's a must-visit spot.
Marty: I don't mind releasing stuff on CD. It's just that all of our offers so far have been for vinyl. In Japan most people don't have record players, so if we got an offer for a CD we'd do it. The format doesn't matter.

MRR: OK guys, we're at the end of this funny trip trough madness and nonsense. Hope you enjoyed it as much as I did. Any last words to say through the *MRR* media machine? Remember, this interview will probably make you as rich and famous as U2 or Tokio (with me sellin' your records in 2067!).
Marty: I want to recreate the sensation that I first felt as a kid listening to Chuck Berry. It drove me to say, "ooohhheeeyyyaaa!" Or when I heard the Sex Pistols and they made me say, "ooohhheeeyyyaaa!" I want as many people as possible to listen to our music, and to go crazy and feel the same thing I felt in my childhood, "ooohhheeeyyyaaa!"

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Bonus track: Thee Mighty Fevers Lifestyle Chart

	Food	Drink	Drug	Movie	Sex Position
Marty	La-men	Black tea	Fuck it	*Forrest Gump*	Delta Blues Style
Tommy	Food	Sapporo black label	Speed	*Tokyo Hot*	Helicopter
Junkie	Meat	Most alcohol	Beer	*The Shining*	All
Yokkon	Rice balls	Cold gin	Biofelmin	*Takeshi Kitano and Shion Sono*	Earth, Wind, & Fire
	Sport	**Book**	**Dream Job**	**Politics**	**Your best skill**
Marty	Baseball	History	NASA	I'm a politician	Imagination
Tommy	Masturbation	*Subeteha Hadaka Ni Nattekara* by Kurumi Morishita	Hand job	Music and sex across borders	Triple axel jump
Junkie	Sex	Japanese literature from 1950-1990	Alive	Please make beeer cheaper	Getting wasted
Yokkon	Earth, Wind, & Fire	I don't read.	Dream job?	Raise consumption tax	Sleeping well, eating a lot

S.U.S.

S.U.S. is an ass kickin' punk'n'roll trio from Belgrade, Serbia, formed in 2002. The band currently consists of Captain Terza (drums, vox), HappKo (bass, vox) and Mr. DNA (guitars, vox). Their first full-length album, Brend Imaginarne Revolucije was released in 2010 on Love Cuffs Records, their own label. S.U.S. is well known for their navy outfit and frenetic live shows, there is little-to-no time in between songs and the band has been known, on many occasions, to play completely non-stop through their entire set. Questions answered by Captain Terza and Mr. DNA. Interview by Ana and Belch. Photos by Anamarija Vartabedijan, Filip Cetkovic, and Vasse.

MRR: The band has existed for more than ten years now, why did you wait for almost seven years to publish your first record?

Captain Terza: Because of thousands of small and a few big problems, some of which are related to the Balkan tilting at windmills, plus we didn't have too much luck. Maybe at the end it's not such a bad thing because, in my opinion, at least we made a quality debut album. When you wait this long to publish your first album, you are inevitably behind with the next, so I think that we should hurry and record the songs that we've made in the meantime, but unfortunately it will depend on some other circumstances.

Mr. DNA: But we have already started with recording the second album, so I hope you've all learned the lyrics and songs from the first one, and you will have the opportunity to update your own "S.U.S. knowledge."

MRR: The name of your first album is Brend Imaginarne Revolucije (imaginary revolution brand)—are you trying to settle the idea of "systematic destruction of the system" with the one that " man is free only in his mind", or ...?

Captain Terza: Yes, it has a little to do with that. Everything is a revolution today. The fight for something, often against something and everything has its own signature, stamp or at least a MySpace, Facebook page. Rebellion is everywhere, therefore, it is indistinguishable, and you can only destroy one system with another one, but again you are going in circles with another stamp.

Mr. DNA: Unfortunately, you can try to destroy the system only if you become a part of the same or another system, but then it's too late, because someday the new one is going to start the same old story. But you've got to fight it. There're no two ways about it. People have all these illusions of freedom, justice, love... but they don't have that, really. Sometimes people just don't know how to rebel.

MRR: You have published the album by yourself. What's wrong with record labels in Serbia?

Captain Terza: You can't expect anything big from domestic record labels. You need to beg so many people, to knock on too many doors, and the result is little above zero. This way we always know our financial position, and we're not making compromises with some idiots who never know how the job needs to be done: This way we got a printed CD with a booklet, that no one would want to fund other than ourselves. It costs a lot but it's worth it. As far as foreign publishing houses go, well, we'll send our records to some addresses, and if someone wants to publish it, that's great. I think that our music is not a template, and we also sing in Serbian so we know that might be a problem, but he who dares wins.

Mr. DNA: We have the same problems that lots of bands have in other countries. Large labels in Serbia are not interested in publishing new bands, but on the other side, most bands do not even think about investing in records, the cheapest thing for them is to upload their album to the web for free download, which allows them to reach a wider range of listeners. You can't be sure what's better right now.

MRR: You mentioned that you're in the process of making a brand new album. Tell me something exciting about the new album.

Captain Terza: Yes, we had some problems completing our second album and we can call it the second phase of the band. The second album will have different lyrics compared to the first one. There won't be so many slogans, but more stories about ordinary folks who fall in love with the wrong people, at the same time fighting alone like Sisyphus, while their neighbors experience car crashes and die, all in a world where one law is applicable to one and another is valid for someone else. A little review of what the word "truth" really means, a bit of contemplating where to escape and have a better life, a few curse words sent to the Nazis and to all those who think they are supposedly doing something to make it better for all of us... a little bit of blues, a bit more cacophony and there's a new punk rock album! We generally take care not to repeat ourselves and to cover a wide range of topics, and sadly there are plenty of those around.

Mr. DNA: This time it is certain that we'll not waste our time making CDs, we will only have vinyl release. It's today's trend to reissue albums on vinyl and even on cassettes. Vinyl is back with a bang. On the one hand this is good, but for us old collectors, vinyl editions are a major blow to the budget as demand dictates the price so we watch helplessly and with great sadness as some editions escape our hands. In the meantime, we will surely make a song about it.

MRR: Do you plan to make a video for some tracks?

Captain Terza: Yes, of course. We just have to decide which song, and we need to find money to make a video. We already have some ideas for a couple of songs, so we'll see what we are gonna do.

Mr. DNA: Fortunately, we have professional recordings of two songs from the national television, so we can already count those as videos, the songs were recorded live with a million cameras, excellent lighting and effects, and it all sounds and looks perfect.

MRR: How would you describe the local punk/rock'n'roll scene? If you were able to change something about the local scene, what would it be?

Captain Terza: I think that everybody knows everything already, especially those who don't do anything. The audience is the same as people in general—uninterested. We're like a sect; we all know each other, always the same people at shows (and some who are always not there). Some new bands are good, some are bad, older ones often lose their nerve, and never played better than now, for example Let's Grow,' who unfortunately do not play anymore. I do not know about the readers, but no one can persuade me that the bands from the '90s sounded better. Potres kicks ass, Ragman too, Hosenfefer, Hang, 888, Incomplete, Gavrilo Princip, Prilicno Prazni, they all sound great. However, hardly any of those bands, including us, play in front of strangers or someone who just happened to come in. This is so miserable that at some point it will have to blow up and start moving in some better direction. Perhaps we can even change something, we will try. That would be the right thing, if we all tried a little harder.

Mr. DNA: But it seems that the good old days are coming back. There's one fantastic young band called Černobilska Deca. These kids are starving for your blood and they are ready to blow your minds with the high-octane rock'n'roll.

MRR: The two of you are also together in the band called 888, which has quite a different sound from S.U.S., do you ever have problems to assign songs you create to each band?

Captain Terza: Well for some songs we did have doubts, but basically as you said, the sounds are very different as is the subject matter, so we simply decide—the hysterical ones go to S.U.S., the drunken poetry goes to 888!

Mr. DNA: We have an accordion in 888 so the song selection is not that difficult; the need for its sound is easily felt in certain songs. Also S.U.S. nurtures the ass kickin' punk'n'roll sound so the song itself simply wanders off towards whatever band it belongs to.

MRR: What do you think about the number of reunions in the world and in the domestic scene?

Captain Terza: I have a feeling that, here in Serbia, bands have a reunion when their front men get divorced or have a mid-life crisis, so they return to the old days and do the only thing they are known for. Unfortunately, rock'n'roll and punk are not so popular, so they certainly don't do it for the money. They occasionally make a good song, but they are rarely a positive surprise. I trust younger bands more.

Mr. DNA: Just look at what happened to Black Flag and the Flag (which sounds normal, if nothing else) in the past year, and senseless gigs of Bad Brains with HR. It's certainly not a good thing. It's not a pretty picture to see a band in such a state. You've only got to hope that you will not suffer such a fate. Being booed by people who grew up with your music, your songs (many of whom never even

dreamt that they would be at your show) is one of the worst things that can happen to you as a musician.

MRR: In your songs, we can hear feelings of boredom, resignation, anger, hopelessness, expressed clearly, directly, without being pathetic, and there are few or almost no happy and light moments. What brought that much bitterness?

Captain Terza: All the songs have a personal touch, both engaged and love songs, as well as those about the eternal problem of being late. We have taken a few punches in life, I think all in all we are not that dark.

Mr. DNA: We talk about everyday situations, about a little man, who is often abandoned to his fate, we are not to be blamed for that, we are just messengers. We don't want to go deep with some philosophy stuff, I think the real world is the one you're living in right now.

MRR: Is a lonely presence of only one song with the theme of love on this album the result of your sailor fashion?

Captain Terza: That just happened, though you can also classify "Boce" as a loser Love song.

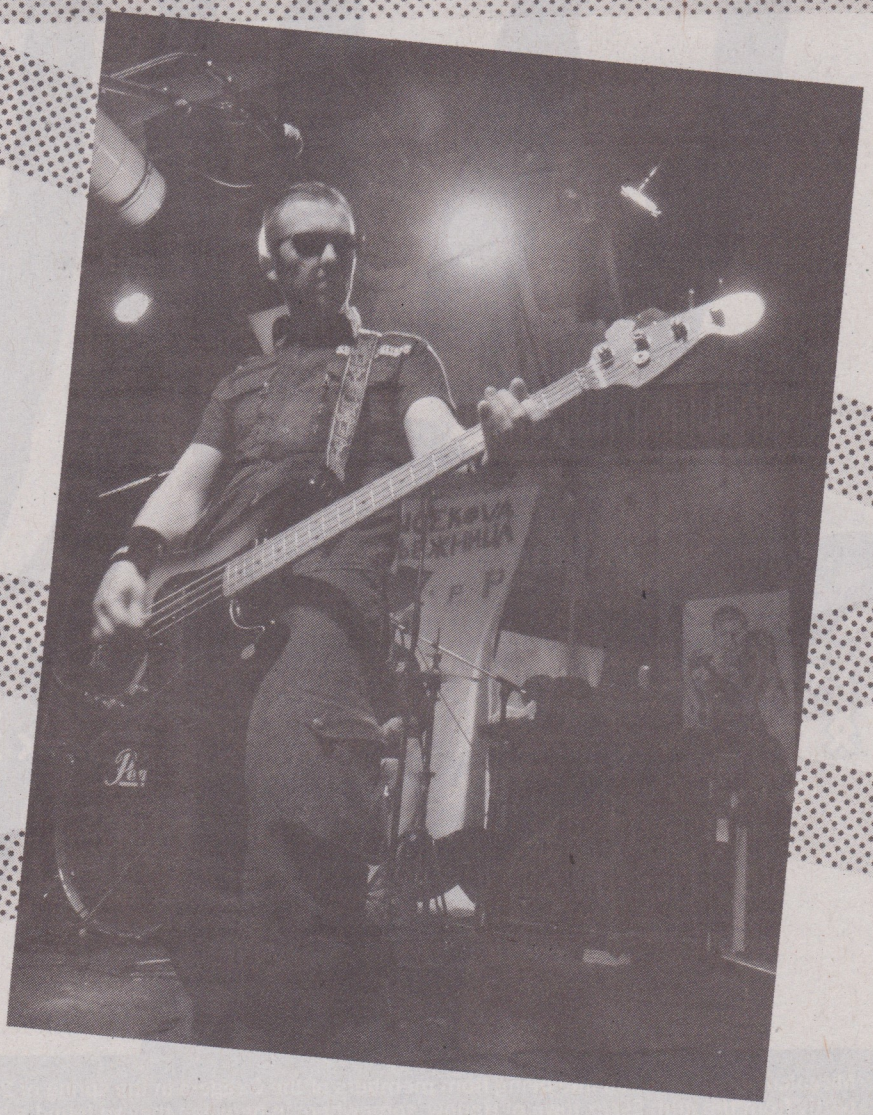
Mr. DNA: You can interpret the song "MMP" as a song that tells about the great "love" for the boys in blue, and also "Sablonska Dosada" talks about "hunting" for love, unsuccessfully unfortunately. I give you my word that we're gonna prepare a couple of love songs for the next album.

MRR: I noticed that you use makeup, lipstick, sequins, I rarely see a band from our region who uses make-up as an integral part of the performance, does anyone help you prepare or is it all your own handiwork?

Captain Terza: Nothing made us do it, we got the idea with no pressure. Well, first we had Funky sailor shirt style, then we added the complete sailor look, so eventually I replaced the glasses with black crayon and eyeliner, and Mr. DNA put sequins on, and we added lipstick as well. The stage is the same as a stage in a theater. People who come to the concert have a full experience, both the image and sound. And we like it

Mr. DNA: It just happened, I really don't know how. We started dressing it up instead of wearing ripped jeans and leather jackets, or some shitty t-shirts. It pissed a lot of people off and that's what I like to do most.

MRR: At gigs you try to make contact with the audience, to make them join and move, which is not always easy. You have played in various places in Serbia, then in Croatia, Montenegro...



What is common for all the people who come to hear you?

Mr. DNA: They live through each day, and so do we. The only difference is in the 45-60 minutes when we're on stage and they are below, but even then we try to delete that line, so often during the show we mix with them and they become a part of S.U.S.. I have always felt like the audience is part of the show, and everybody should feel like they're all at this big party kind of event. It is the audience that we serve. We take them very seriously. Shows are like tasks for me. I like doing them and completing them.

Captain Terza: They all have in common the fact that they, as well as us, always need just a little to be happy. We all love to eat, drink, screw and embrace someone.

MRR: You had the chance to play with bands coming from all around the world. How much has that experience been important to you as musicians?

Mr. DNA: This has been very valuable for us. You can learn something new from older people, as well as from younger people. So we all borrow the knowledge and tricks from each other.

Captain Terza: It really means a lot to us, both the musical experience as well as the personal. We have gained a lot of friends, probably some enemies too (that's important as well) and we have met some people who created what we have built upon.

MRR: At one point you say that the bands are "the only joy in life." I know how much some bands are important to me and to my friends. Will the music, most of all punk/rock'n'roll, have enough strength in the future to really mean something to those who play it and those who listen to it?

Mr. DNA: I think that everything about music energy is explained in the song "Raw Power" by the Stooges. We are moving towards better days. It will be one hell of a struggle and there will be some considerable challenges ahead. I do my best to be a part of that.

Captain Terza: Yes, I think it will never disappear. Everyone who plays know how much it all means. Those before us asked themselves the same, then we appeared, and someone will appear after us.

Miscalculations mutated into being from members of the Gaggers in the spring of 2013. Partly from the dank polluted city of London, and partly from the grim Essex town of Harlow, somewhere in-between they've found a home for a bunch of songs they wrote that didn't fit into their current bands. Quicker than a hiccup they unleashed a 7" on No Front Teeth Records (both pressings of which are now out-of-print), a split 7" with the Stitches, and released their debut LP on Dead Beat Records at the beginning of this year. But don't for one second believe the short time frame from their inception to record release will result in a rushed, lacklustre LP. The songs are well crafted, dark, and manage to seamlessly flit between sounding like it was released on Ny Våg to sounding like Tomata Du Plenty's wet dream. Interview by Fisher in London, 2014. Photo by Rose Palumbo-Rodrigues.

MRR: What made you start this band? Why the change in direction from your other bands: The Gaggers, Botox Rats, the Ladykillers, Electric Cocks, etc.?

Marco: Well, I'd already been doing some minimal synth stuff with the Exit so I was really into the idea of going further in this direction, but with a stronger emphasis on punk than what I had been doing with that. Shaun played me a bunch of music that he had been working on that was in a similar sombre vein, and it just took off from there.

Shaun: We just wanted to do something darker, and more edgy than what we're doing with our other bands.

Marco: The whole way we approached this is so different than the way we work with our other bands. Miscalculations is a wide-open project. There are no boundaries at all, which is so refreshing. There is no blueprint for Miscalculations.

Shaun: We go in any direction that we feel, and build it up from there.

MRR: Who or what is the main influence for this new band?

Shaun: Definitely the melodic punk of bands like the Vicious, Masshysteri, and Tristess.

Marco: With the stark, cold sound of Joy Division, Invasionen, Circuit 7, and the chaotic sounds of bands like the Vicious Visions, the Screamers, and the Units too.

Shaun: Also, some straight-up punk stuff too. It's a real mix. We wanted to create something with a strong emphasis on a really European sound.

MRR: How do you write Miscalculations songs?

Marco: Once we put together the pieces we had we were very specific about the way we wanted to write and record Miscalculations music. The music and the lyrics were written completely separate, in two different locations.

Shaun: The music was written and recorded in Harlow in Essex, and the lyrics and vocals were written and recorded in North London. We didn't know what the songs would become until we met up and put the two pieces together.

Marco: We wanted to have that marriage of two very separate things. We have never sat down and written a song together in the same room, which is the main difference from other bands we are in. I always remember this piece I read about Pink Floyd when I was about twelve or thirteen that was about the band recording totally separately in a studio, never meeting up to work on music together. I don't know if that's true, but I thought it was a really interesting approach to writing and, in a way, sort of what we have tried to achieve here. It's amazing how well two completely separate things can match up.

MRR: Do you think the London punk scene is healthy, or too cliquey? Most of the time when someone has contributed to MRR in regards to London, the scene doesn't seem to spread any further than their distro and their mates' bands. How does it compare to the rest of Europe's?

Marco: I personally think London's punk scene could be healthier. It's a very enthusiastic scene, but a very small one too. It reminds me of the beginnings of a scene. There is definitely a lot of excitement and energy, but it just feels to me like it needs a spark to get it to the next level, with more bands, more punk nights, more punk labels and distros—just more for punks in general. It's felt this way to me for a while.

Shaun: So many bands tour Europe and leave London out altogether, even if they come to England. There is more interest in our music, of all the bands we are in, outside of England. There's definitely a healthier

scene in other countries like Germany, which has a thriving scene with lots of bands, venues, labels, distros, and record stores. It's not like there's nothing going on in London at all, because the're some great punk nights, like Some Weird Sin, Garageland, and Dirty Water, and a handful of great labels too.
Marco: Yeah, and we have All Ages Records in Camden, which is the only punk record store in London, and a great place to get records on labels like Ny Våg, Feral Ward, Deranged, Dirtnap, Sorry State, Hjernespind, Johnny Cat, etc., which we just wouldn't be able to get here otherwise, apart from online. It's so important to have a record shop like that in a scene.

MRR: Do you think nostalgia makes people complacent? In the sense that most middle-aged men seem more inclined to watch novelty covers bands than come out to support any bands writing their own material?
Marco: Definitely, and I just can't understand that mentality at all. People seem very happy to just live in the past with the same rehashed thing over and over again rather than listen to what new bands are doing. I have never understood the cover band thing. I just don't get it. Sure, throw a cool cover or two in your set, but covers the whole time? It's super important to know the history and roots of your music and scene and we, as a band and individuals, are definitely inspired by that. And you can see that from the bands we listed earlier as influences for the Miscalculations, but to solely dwell in the past is not healthy.

MRR: What made you want to pick up an instrument when you were a kid?
Shaun: The first music I heard that made me want to play would be bands my mum was listening to, like early Black Sabbath and Hawkwind. This definitely sparked an interest in wanting to learn guitar initially, and then other instruments.
Marco: With me it would have been the Cure. I saw them on *Top of the Pops* probably around 1988, and I was just blown away. I was a ten-year-old kid. It was the first time I'd seen anything like that, and it instantly made an impact. Their sound, their aesthetic—it was an epiphany for sure. I was always into music from as far back as I can remember listening to my parents 7"s. Lots of Italian bands, the Beatles, Elvis, country music. I had no prejudice. I was happy to just be hearing the music.

MRR: Who are some of the best bands at the moment?
Shaun: Sonic Avenues, the Love Triangle, Los Pepes, Hex Dispensers, and the Black Lips.
Marco: Generacion Suicida, Radioactivity, Mind Spiders, Therapists—their *Hate Sweats* record blew me away. The Chemicals rule too.

MRR: How important do you think a band's aesthetics are? Will you make a judgement on a band based on their artwork?
Marco: Aesthetics are super important. I don't believe people in bands should feel forced to dress a certain way—dress how you want—but I believe in a strong, but unregimented aesthetic for sure. I dress the way I dress regardless of being involved in music. As for artwork, that's very important. In many cases it's the first thing that will draw your attention to a band, and I have made judgements for sure which have not always been correct, but I think the way you present yourself and your craft is just as important as the music itself. It takes just as long to make an ugly record cover as it does to make an attractive one.
Shaun: I do like seeing a band that sounds nothing like they look, or how their artwork looks. Something like Masshysteri who don't dress like punks, or even someone like the Descendants, who look *normal*, and the Black Lips who play '60s music and wear basketball shirts. I love that.
Marco: For sure. I don't believe the art of a punk record has to be restrained to being *punk*. It should just be eye-catching and stimulating. I have co-run No Front Teeth records for the past thirteen years, and from day one we made a pact to never be negligent with the art of our releases, and we still stand by that today. I do 99% of the artwork for the label, and I take it very seriously.

MRR: Tell me a bit about the split with the Stitches? How did that come about?
Marco: Well, Shaun and I are both in the Gaggers, and we did a split 7" with the Stitches last summer, and played with them when they came over to London. I've known Mike for a while from when we released the *Monday Morning Ornaments* 7" on No Front Teeth. We thought it would be a cool idea to do a punk/electro split record, as the Stitches re-recorded stripped down, electro versions of their songs on their *Do the Jet Set* 12" and had a left-over track from that session. We included both the punk version and the electro version of the same song by each band on the 7". So one side was the punk side, and one side was the electro side, and I did all this really vague Hans Bellmer/ Russian Constructivist style artwork to go with it.
Shaun: We wanted the whole thing to be really stark with as little information on there as possible.
Marco: Yeah, we really wanted to hit people with something a little unexpected and anomalous. It's definitely one of my favourite releases we've put out. I love the way it looks like nothing else we've released.

MRR: Places people should visit should they come to London?
Shaun: One of my favourite parts of London is Upper Street in Islington, which has the Hope & Anchor on it, which is obviously legendary in punk rock, and just a great area but I can't afford to live there!
Marco: I think one of the only places in London that still has a great '70s vibe is SoHo. There's still a seedy feel to it that has been sucked out of everywhere else. Places that used to have some soul, like Camden and Carnaby Street, are just like regular high streets now. I used to be so excited as a kid and a teenager going to these places, and it's such a shame that all that has gone now, and it's just all big business. I still love Portobello Road.

MRR: What are Miscalculations lyrics about?
Marco: Anything. For me that's the beauty with working in this band. As much as I like writing lyrics for the Gaggers, Shanghai Wires, or Botox Rats, it's much more claustrophobic as I feel the lyrics have to be about a certain subject and convey a certain personality, which I feel does get great results. Restriction is not always a bad thing! It certainly keeps you focused! But with the Miscalculations there is no identified subject matter, no defined personality. It is a complete blank canvas, which is a super exciting prospect. It allows the mind to wander and to flow freely. I tend to write from experience as much as I can.

MRR: What's next for the Miscalculations?
Marco: We have a new 7" in the works, and we are working on the second full-length too.
Shaun: Yeah, and we are also working on a 10" split with the Exit, Marco's minimal synth project. It's going to be three songs each, and it's going to be really stripped-down Miscalculations. Cold and mechanical!

MRR: Finally, what does the name mean?
Marco: The name is supposed to represent the way in which the band came about. Kind of like a Francis Bacon painting. The premise of a vague idea that ends up spiralling into something completely different. A perfect miscalculation, completely unplanned. It's like we had all these different pieces of a puzzle that just so happened to fit together. The idea of adding, and subtracting, and transplanting parts.
Shaun: Audio surgery.

CHECK OUT: WWW.MISCALCULATIONS.BANDCAMP.COM WWW.NOFRONTTEETH.NET

The first time I ever heard or saw Glue was when they were opening for Hoax on the Austin stop of their last tour. Within two songs, the entire crowd had dissolved into a pit, while their vocalist threw his mic stand into the audience and started hopping around the stage like a manic demon. They were snotty, intense, and it was one of the best hardcore shows I had ever seen. Since then I've seen them four more times, and they just keep getting better. I finally decided to talk to them, after their show opening for Back to Back, the Flex, and Violent Reaction. Their current form is Arak Avakin on bass, Mose Brown on drums, Harris Greenwood on vocals, and Cody Cox on guitar. The interview was with Harris and Cody, though Mose joined midway through. Interview by David Glickman. Photos by Martin Sorrondeguy

MRR: So Harris, why did you start Glue?
Harris Greenwold: I didn't start Glue; Cody did.

MRR: Cody, why did you start Glue?
Cody Cox: That's a good question…because it's a project I'd wanted to do for a long time, a style of music I wanted to play for a long time. Something that I hadn't really seen in a way that I wanted to see it and so I decided I wanted to try and write something. I guess that's why the demo came out the way it did, if that makes sense. I think it's…
Harris: What you needed to do at that time?
Cody: Yeah, I don't know. I'm happy for what it is, at the time that it came out, but right now I think the EP sort of stands for itself in a different way. I started Glue because I needed to do a fucking hardcore band that I loved, something that could be my baby. Doing something I wanted to for a long time and I felt a strain within myself because I was musically conflicted with what I was playing and how much I enjoyed it. So I wanted to dedicate my time to something that was for real.

MRR: Were you playing in other bands at the time?
Cody: Oh yeah. I played in numerous hardcore outfits from San Antonio and Austin: Cutting Loses, Hardside, Bitter End, an old band called Losing Grip. Stuff that was very much high school Cody. And it's shit I can still get down with sometimes, but I wanted to do something that I felt had a more personal touch that mattered more to me.

MRR: What were you getting more into?
Harris: Punk more so.
Cody: Yeah of course. My musical taste developed. Not even changed dramatically really, but it's evolved into something else and it's allowed me to play different music and buy new shit and experiment with different sounds. Doing Glue, and doing various other bands I'm doing now, they've helped me grow as a musician in a few ways and that's something I never expected to happen with a punk band, but it's actually the most challenging shit I've had to put out and I think that's good for just me as a person. It's the only artistic expres-

sion I had at the time, which I should probably change, but it's what I've got.

MRR: Well, you're playing with Impalers now.

Cody: Yeah, but that's a situation where I fucking love it, I love who's in it, and I love the music they play, but I also am joining them four years down the line. You know it's…

MRR: Not personal.

Cody: Yeah, it's a coattail situation. For instance, I went up to New York with them this weekend and it was fucking sick, but there's a little piece of me that wants to bring Glue up there so I can have my own shit.

MRR: Harris, had you played in bands before Glue?

Harris: Only Iron Youth and that was it. I grew up in Austin and when I was growing up everyone in the hardcore scene was much older than me and no one wanted to be in a band with me obviously. I was sixteen, everyone was in their mid-twenties already, and so there were no kids ever. Then finally kids started coming out when I was twenty, and Recide existed and Creemers existed, and I guess at one point I felt "I need to do a band now." So we did Iron Youth and that went for about a year. Then Cody started Glue and I said "I want to be in Glue", and so I started playing bass [laughs]. I was terrible at it and Cody Phifer (Glue's original vocalist) wouldn't ever write lyrics. Then he was going to move so he wasn't going to be vocalist because we wanted someone permanent to be vocalist. And I was like "Well Glue is the exact band I want to sing for," so now I do vocals for Glue.

MRR: You've been playing live for a while now. Has the way you play changed at all because you're spastic on stage.

Cody: Probably not enough.

Harris: Yeah, it has not changed enough. It was fun for a while, and still is, but at some point I was like "I'm simple" (on stage), so that bummed me out and I wanted to do something more involved. So that evolved into me getting into the idea of performance, performance art, and conveying more through a performance. And I would like to try to do that, and I think I disappoint myself sometimes when it's either simple or somewhat gimmicky. It's my fault, but I need to start doing more.

MRR: You keep talking about how you want to change things or feel stuck and you just finished recording what's going to be your debut 7". Did you go into recording that 7" with a specific or different sound in mind?

Cody: I had many specific sounds in mind but I think it came together in just the right way. Working with Hans (Zimmerman) is like a miracle because I can give him shitty YouTube videos of demos from the '80s and say "I want to sound like this" and he can do it in a way that makes sense to my band and what's going on. Recording this time was definitely much different than it was the first time. I felt like I had…a spiritual experience through the beginning of this whole record and it finishing was exactly what I needed; it was a relief off my shoulders. I didn't give a shit when we did the demo. I played funny gear, the tone of it is different than it should have been, but whatever. Everything worked out and I hold more importance to this record for sure.

Harris: The sound stuff normally comes down to Cody but…

Cody: It's all pretty cooperative. We all understand each other pretty well and have specific ideas in mind.

MRR: Well, Cody is working with Impalers and a bunch of different bands and Mose you have your own band Institute with Arak too. How do you know if it's a cohesive project, what's a Glue sound or what's something you want to save for your own project?

Mose: Well, Cody writes all the Glue songs.

Harris: Mose writes all the Institute songs with Adam. I don't write shit; I write lyrics when I have to. So all those things are written by different people who just love each other [laughs].

MRR: So you just did a mini tour up to the Northeast. Was that your first proper tour?

Harris: It wasn't just the Northeast. It was the East Coast then back out the Midwest. But yeah, that was the first proper one. We had played Kansas City before just to play with those kids, then we did it once to play with Dawn of Humans which was amazing. But yeah it was the first tour. It was great, successful, fun, easy. Every bad thing, in my opinion, was a good thing. Like every time the van broke down in Toronto or Chicago I didn't care about being stuck in Toronto or Chicago. The only bad thing that actually happened was that Mose got hurt and didn't get to come.

Cody: Yeah, with all the member upsets that were going on, it worked out in a very interesting way.

Mose: Yeah, I had a great time laying on the couch for three weeks.

Harris: That's where the Institute record comes from.

Mose: [laughs] That's kind of true.

Harris: The whole record's just you reading and writing lyrics. There's one on there where I was like "There's Nausea. That's where he was reading Nausea."

Mose: No, there's one song where I stole a bunch of lyrics from Nausea. Honestly, everything else is me though. One song is blatantly Nausea, the rest is me.

MRR: Do you think Austin is supportive of a punk scene? Because you said it's changed over time. I mean, you put out a tape that documented Austin but it was also called *This is Austin, Not that Great*.

Harris: That was mainly a shitty pun based on This is Boston, not LA. I do think Austin is supportive. It's nice and it's helpful…I don't want to say we wouldn't do it if it wasn't, but I think it does push us, pushes everyone to make better music. I think in the end, at least, I do it for me…

MRR: Well, you run a tape label, False Form, and you put out a bunch of Austin bands. What brought that about?

Cody: Yeah, what the fuck is that about dude? [everybody laughs]

Harris: I liked the idea of a cohesive body of work, which sounds so stupid and pretentious when talking about punk tapes, but…

Mose: Oh, Austin in 2014? Oh yeah, False Form.

Harris: Yeah, it's fifteen kids in this many bands, and if people want to look at Austin I want them to look at one thing. "Oh that's all the stuff that's coming right now." And obviously there's stuff that I don't put out that's still worth mentioning. I want people to look and say, "Oh, that's happening there." Like the New York kids or the Northwest Indiana kids; all the same kids who you look at and go "Oh, they just all do this."

MRR: You want to document it?

Harris: Yeah. I want to document it and I want to fit it all together into one thing that people can get at once.

Cody: It's the same way you know Boston is Boston. Cities are a certain way some times and it gives them credence or a reason to keep going.

MRR: Do you feel Texas is sort of expanding in terms of supporting punk, because a lot of scenes are happening in Dallas and Houston and even McAllen too…

Mose: McAllen has always been big though…

MRR: Do you feel the scenes are connected or do you think they're all in their own worlds and travel to one another?

Harris: Well, I know I can say that the Houston kids are some of my best friends. I love the Fort Worth kids, all the north Texas kids. We're always supportive of their bands; they're always supportive of us. All the shows when we travel and when they travel are always cool. I think that we're all supportive of each other. I wish there were more McAllen bands right now that came (to Austin) because there aren't really any and I wouldn't mind going there to play at all. But yes, I do think that it has expanded in a very positive way and we all support each other.

Cody: From even playing in other hardcore bands throughout other cities there's never been more of a unified scene, which sounds impossible and unreal, but I'm truly happy to say there's a pretty big sense of unity throughout different cities. It's the first time Texas has ever been like this with hardcore, in my life at least. And it doesn't hurt that there are four or five sick bands in each city that can foster a great show.

Harris: It's the best Texas has been in a long time.

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Glue's demo was just released as a 7" by Lagerville Records. Their proper debut 7" will come out via Video Disease/Katorga Works sometime in the fall.

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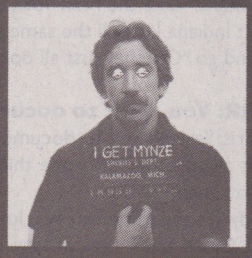

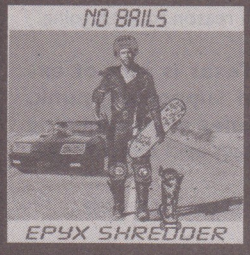

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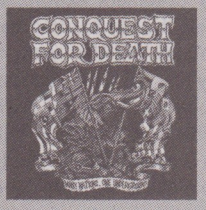

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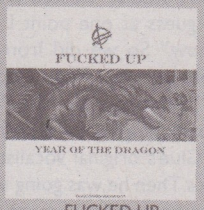

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EXTREME NOISE RECORDS

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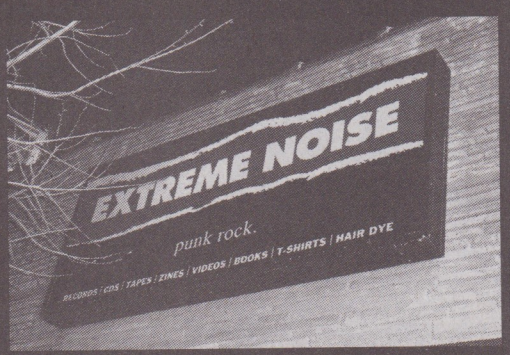
I first discovered this South Minneapolis record store in the mid-'90s on a trip with my band from Chicago that played the basement. A few years later after moving here, I immediately became involved with the all-volunteer-run collective and Southside staple of the hardcore/DIY punk scene. There is no other place like it. It attracts punks, straight edgers, freaks, total nerds, stoned-out creeps and frantic moms during the holiday season. Open every day of the year, it's a place to get your punk fix. Many years, many new releases, and almost as many volunteers since their grand opening, I got a chance to sit down with some beautiful faces—and one ugly one—to talk about the birth of Extreme Noise Records.
Interview by Disdoom. Store photos and flyers from the Extreme Noise archive. Anniversary weekend photos by Adam Bubolz.

MRR: OK, well, it's been 20 years of Extreme Noise Records—fuck yeah! How did the store get started, what was the idea behind starting it?

Bryan A: I wasn't there when the store was started, but generally punk records were unreliably carried at local stores and there was a desire to have a place dedicated to the DIY ethic and built from the local punk community. Places like Epicenter in San Francisco and Resurrection in NYC were inspirations, and it evolved from there.



Rana: I didn't move to Minneapolis until around six months after the store started, but the idea was to have a punk-run record store and resource for the punk community. I don't remember how many folks put in initial investments to the store, but each person would, say, pay for an order from a distributor. And then someone else paid the first month's rent, and someone contributed the stereo, someone bought the cash register, etc. etc. I think its really cool how it started. People really wanted it to happen and took a risk, and here we are!

Juicy Jesse: The story goes that back in the early '90s. There wasn't a whole lot to choose from in the local record stores, punk-rock-wise at least. I'm sure there was plenty of Mudhoney and other grungy alternative garbage just stockpiled in those stores. And now all that shit is popular again. Sorry, first question and I'm already off topic. Anyways, the condensed story is that some local record labels and distros got together, put up some money, rented a storefront and boom, Extreme Noise was opened.

Shivaun: I've only been volunteering at the store since 2008, so I wasn't around for the its beginnings, but I've been working on the 20th anniversary oral history zine, so I do know a bit about this now. In the early 1990s, pre-internet, there was no

dedicated punk store, but Minneapolis was home to Profane Existence and Havoc, who had large distros and tons of experience slinging records, and a ton of dedicated punks who felt that their needs weren't being met by what infrastructure existed. I just saw Patti Rhodes' film When We Play For Real, which we screened for the 20th anniversary weekend. There is an extended interview with two women who continually harp on the lack of unity among crusties, straight edge kids, pop punk kids, emo kids, and myriad other subgenre adherents. It seems a little silly nowadays, since the internet has made us all experts on everything (or just dilettantes about all kinds of punk), but at the time this stuff was real! The store was a real space for this scene unity from the get-go.

MRR: Tell me more about what Extreme Noise Records is. What goals or objectives does the collective have? I mean, it's more than just a record store.

Juicy: First and foremost Extreme Noise is a volunteer-run/co-op independent punk record store, so our main objective is to make enough money to stay afloat and to keep our shelves stocked with the best punk from all genres from all over the world. All the profits are re-invested into the store and into the local punk community. It's also a place for people to get information on upcoming shows and events in the community.

Bryan A: I think the reason we have lasted this long is that our number one priority has been keeping the doors open by serving the Twin Cities punk scene. We have always resisted mail order and instead catered our inventory to what people that live here want. As that focus has paid off, and we had money to reinvest in the scene, we have always tried to help out local zines, sponsor punk venues, festivals, anything we could to help build things here. Yeah, I guess we are more than a records store—people meet here and do other things: bands, show spaces, whatever. Maybe we are a bit of an incubator in that way.

Shivaun: We're basically a clearinghouse for the punk community. We sell every subgenre imaginable, so local bands of all stripes stop in to at least consign their records. We reinvest all our profits in getting more cool records and supporting other punk projects.

Brad: Well, according to our mission statement, our first priority is to be the best record store we can be. We also strive to support other punk endeavors. Honestly, the members of the "collective" that go to meetings and attend to more than just working a daily shift can't take on much more outside ordering records, organizing volunteers, paying the bills, and the occasional sponsorship of a show or event.

Rana: It's also a resource for the punk community. These days we are fortunate enough to give back when we can and do some really kick ass things —like the anniversary shows!

MRR: How are you achieving these goals? I mean, you don't run a business for 20 years without doing something right?

Rana: Everyone who volunteers is and has been really dedicated. No one gets paid, people want to make it happen because they love it and they believe in it! We are also around because we have an amazing scene here.

Shivaun: Well, being all-volunteer certainly helps us avoid a considerable amount of overhead that would make the store a financial disaster. That aside, we have been a mainstay of the scene forever, and I think we'll be around for a lot longer. We aren't the only game in town (there are a lot of good record stores in the Twin Cities!), but our customers shop here by choice. We are for punks, by punks.

Juicy: I think it all comes down to keeping current on what is just downright good music and what is "cool" or "trendy" and figuring out what your customers want to buy. The classics are classic for a reason and will always sell no matter what. When CDs were king we had tons of them, now we barely have any. Back in the day, there were unlimited amounts of god-awful ska punk. We carry a lot more metal these days compared to earlier years. With the massive amounts of hardcore and punk, there is also shoegaze, noise, post-punk gothy stuff, psych, random indie stuff and even some of that crappy '90s alternative stuff that is cool again for some reason. Give the kids what they want!! It also doesn't hurt that most punks are extremely obsessive when it comes to collecting vinyl, especially all the volunteers.

Bryan A: Also, I think one thing that has been really good for the store is a core group of stubborn volunteers that have stuck it out from the beginning—or at least for ten or more years. Having that experience and memory around to keep things on track and remember what we fucked up on in the past.

MRR: So, tell me about your involvement with Extreme Noise, when and how you personally got involved.

Juicy: I moved to Minneapolis in 1999 from a smaller city in Minnesota. So I had been to Extreme Noise many times before, but obviously started going more often after moving. I've pretty much always worked a Monday-Friday job so Saturday was my day to go to the store. After a couple of years there was an opening and the guys on the shift asked me to join in 2002. We've had a few personnel changes on our shift over the years, people always come and go. But we've had the same four guys on our shift for close to eight years now, I think, so that's pretty awesome.

Shivaun: I moved here in 2006 to go to school in St. Paul. I had volunteered/worked at the Ché Café for a couple years back home in San Diego, but I had pretty severe burnout from that (super intense and long collective meetings were all too common, and I went to way too many shows). I didn't really know anyone or hang out or go to shows when I first moved here, but I did buy a lot of records. Eventually Brad got me on a shift. I've been on the Monday night shift since I started. It's the perfect thing to do if you're too shy to write a zine or be in a band or put on shows but really like to nerd out on music.

Rana: I've always loved music and records; got into punk when I was 13. I went to record stores every chance I got and spent all my money on records! I got involved with Extreme Noise in 1995, soon after I moved to Minneapolis. I initially had a shift on Saturday, then was asked to do the taxes for the second or third year we were open, then gradually ended up doing the store accounting and taxes and have been doing it ever since. Oddly enough, I love doing the store's accounting. I do accounting for my 9-to-5 job, so it's nice to be able to volunteer my skills to the store. I don't have time to do a regular volunteer shift any longer, so I'm happy that I can still be involved with the store.

Brad: I started volunteering some time in 2004 or 2005. I tried getting on a shift for almost a year before forcing my way onto Thursday 12-4 with Mark. I held down that shift for maybe three or four years. I have been working Saturdays 4-8 for several years now. For a while I was doing both, but now I'm down to just Saturday. In addition, I order records from four accounts, serve on the board of directors, and am the volunteer coordinator.

Bryan A: I was around the punk scene doing a zine, helping with a local record label, part of a collective doing shows, and someone asked me to step in and do some ordering. Shortly after that, the store moved to its second location and it needed a lot of remodeling. I grew up in a family of painters, and so I had the tools and skills to help out with the new space. Once I invested a bunch of time into the store, and saw everyone else working on it too, I was hooked. That was 17 years ago.

Ryan: I got involved not long after I moved here in 2001 on a shift with my best friend, Lani. She had previously volunteered two years prior for a summer. When her friends Ben and Jolene had to leave their shift, I was ecstatic to sign on. I remember being so stoked on my first shift when an order came in from Ebullition. There was a huge stack of the first Scholastic Deth 7" on that order. Holy shit, I thought to myself, I would love to be the one ordering the Ebullition account! A couple years later, I wound up ordering not just Ebullition but almost half of what the store stocks.

MRR: What are some of your favorite things about volunteering here? What keeps you coming back weekly, or multiple times a week?

Shivaun: I love that there is a dedicated time each week to hang out with my friends and listen to records. I have made some awesome friends from all over the place working at the store and learned about a million cool records. That's the best. Also, it's by far the chillest collectively run organization I've ever been a part of, or can even imagine being a part of.

Juicy: Mostly it gets me out of the house every Saturday and the other three guys on the shift are a blast to hang out with. Lots of discussions about how awesome Japanese hardcore/punk is. Discussions on how European Oi can be so damn good and why American Oi sucks ass. Multiple discussions about The Big Lebowski. Lots of dick and fart jokes to go around and we get to send people home with cool music. And pizza!!! Brian from Kontrasekt is on this shift and we eat pizza pretty much every Saturday from Uptown Pizza across the street. Long talks about pizza, and pizza tattoos also. Did I mention dick and fart jokes? Did I mention pizza?

Rana: Of course I love records, so its great to see what is new that is coming in. I want to make sure the store stays alive, so coming in and doing my part is my incentive to come back. It's going to sound weird, maybe, but everyone here has such great senses of humor and are sarcastic smart asses. I never laugh more than when I'm here. It's a nice break from the crabby assholes I work with during the week.

Bryan A: Yeah, the records! And the community. I probably wouldn't have much of a social life without the store and all the people around it. You volunteer on something like this with some of the same people for ten, fifteen years, and you get to know them pretty well—good or bad.

Brad: Maybe it's a selfish reason, but first dibs on used records is high on the list. Making sure I don't miss anything sick that comes into the store. Also, collecting and listening to records has always been my favorite part of being into punk. Just taking part in the process week to week is fun for me.

MRR: I know you've had to see some really good records come though the store, hilarious experiences on your shift or even had some really bizarre customer interactions—tell me a crazy story about something that happened on your shift.

Juicy: One day this stoner dude comes in. He reeked like he had just finished a huge bowl. After a few minutes of looking at records he holds up a grind record and asks if he can listen to it. I put it on and after a couple songs I ask him "What do you think?" hoping I can sell it to him and/or take the record off because personally I can't stand grind...except for Monster X, they are fucking awesome. Anyways, he says "I already have it, I just wanted to hear it." Then he asks me if I liked it. "I'm not really into that type of music," I tell him. He then tries to sell me on this grind record that I just told him that I didn't like. He goes back to browsing records and a few minutes later holds up another grind record and asks me if I'd heard it. I told him again that I don't really like grind and I don't really ever listen to it. He continues to shop and buys a couple of used grind 7"s. This particular scenario has replayed itself many times over on multiple different Saturdays with the same stoner dude.

Bryan A: It seems there has always been a steady stream of ridiculousness, but I can't recall an epic crazy story. Most recently I had to chase a woman out of the store who was yelling at customers, barking like a dog, and rubbing spit on the window. You probably couldn't call her a customer though!

Brad: For good records, we used to have this dude Jeff slowly selling an incredible collection of '80s US and international hardcore. He would come in every couple months with a crate full of records, usually on my Thursday shift. Got some great stuff from his collection (Teen Idles 7", Svart Framtid 7", Terveet Kadet Äärетön Joulu, second Rutto 7", Bannlyst 7", etc) over the years. One day he came in when I wasn't there and someone called to let me know. At the time I didn't have a cellphone but checked my messages at home right before I had to go to class. I went into full-blown record panic mode. Skipped class and ran every red light on my bike between the U and the store. Got there in time to get Poison Idea Pick Your King on clear. Worth it.

Ryan: I was at the store when the IRS was auditing us. Rana (our accountant) spent a few hours with them on a Tuesday and it was kind of hilarious. We were all certain they thought they were going to walk in on a completely empty storefront like this was some kind of money laundering venture for some shady businessman since we had all this money and no one was getting paid. They were actually very cordial with us all and got a real kick out of reading our printouts of weekly meeting minutes.

Sean: The cool thing about working Saturdays is that a lot of larger-drawing events happened during the shift. In the early 2000s, the Thrashfests were bringing tons of kids from all over, and they would all stop at Extreme Noise before the show. Our store events usually fall on Saturdays as well, like Record Store Day and our spring record swaps. During these days you can see people from all different scenes and eras of Twin Cities punk. Seeing the store packed to capacity on these days seems pretty crazy to me, but then there's also been rare mint-condition first-press records that have slipped through the cracks and sold for repress prices, battles with bums and meth-heads, once someone on our shift almost came to blows with a nutty regular who demanded a discount on $1 promo CDs!

Rana: I got robbed on my shift. Not very hilarious and I do not recommend it—no sir.

Shivaun: My recent favorite is this guy who tried to steal something and then called and complained that I kicked him out for stealing.

MRR: Ahhh, punks don't steal from punks, ya bastards! OK, OK, with the record/music industry changing in terms or how it markets and sells music, do you think these practices could sustain the collective well into the future?

Juicy: No, I don't think relying on stoner dudes to buy grind records is a good business model.

Bryan A: It seems like we just evaluate our sales each year, and go, "Huh, looks like we go another year!" Sales took a steep dive in 2006 with the decline of CDs and the popularity of mainstream punk on the wane. We definitely started talking about the end, and I never thought we'd make it this long. I thought if we could hobble along to our 20th that'd be really cool. Things got better after the low point, vinyl got popular again, and we are doing OK. For now.

Brad: Hard to say. The resurgence of vinyl has been a boon for the store to a certain extent, but it hasn't made up entirely for the death of CD sales. And selling expensive and limited reissues is a very different game than slinging massive amounts of $3 Aus Rotten EPs or hundreds of $10 NOFX CDs. We've adjusted pretty well on that front, though. On the other hand, while I don't think it will sink the store in the long run, the online market for used records has really hurt us. Less and less people are bringing in records to sell, even though we pay way better than any other local shop. Our limited customer base makes it hard to compete with the prices records command online, so many people take their used stuff there. Some stores can make up for these losses by buying and selling used stuff online, but that is a tough proposition for a store run by 30 volunteers. I would like to see us find a way to get more used records into the store, but the nature of the game makes it tough these days.

MRR: Could Extreme Noise survive a zombie attack?

Ryan: Definitely. We have Felix Von Havoc on our side.

Brad: No?

Rana: Ummmm, no. While most of the volunteers would band together and get shit done, I don't think our wall of windows are going to do us any favors in the case of an attack. We've got some browsers we could tear apart to board up those windows, but they're really nice record browsers and it sure would be a shame to see them dismantled knowing the hard work that went into them! I don't think we really have great weaponry in the store and certainly no one is going to sacrifice any records to make some sort of makeshift weapon. Except for maybe the discount dungeon records. And...I have a feeling that some of our volunteers might compromise our safety to get a six-pack at the liquor store across the street.

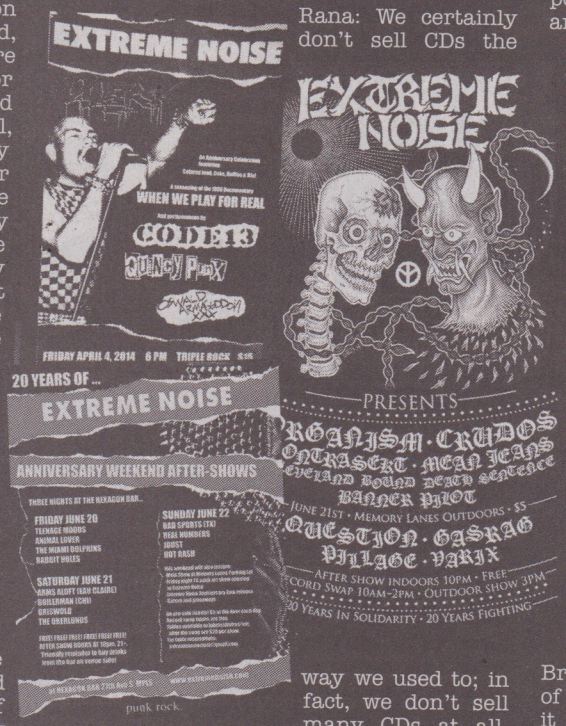
Bryan A: Hell no! We'd have to have a couple of meetings about what to do, there'd be all kinds of weird neurotic shit, and before you knew it we'd all be waiting on customers as the living dead! And people think our customer service sucks now!

Juicy: Depends, fast zombies—no fucking way. Classic zombies—we have a slim chance. Very slim chance.

MRR: Similar to a zombie attack, how have MP3s and digital music formats impacted an independent record store?

Brad: As mentioned earlier, CDs sales have fallen off a cliff. I wasn't around but I understand that in the early 2000s, the store made money hand over fist selling pop punk and crust CDs. That market is gone, but more people are interested in an enduring format (vinyl) as a result of the availability of digital music.

Bryan A: I am sure they have hurt us. If you are a collector, you still buy the vinyl and hopefully get a download code. But, younger kids can get into punk, download everything or buy tracks from iTunes, and never come into our store except to buy shirts and patches. We can't keep the doors open on accessories, so I guess we will see how it goes. Are there enough older collectors to keep us going? Not sure.



Rana: We certainly don't sell CDs the way we used to; in fact, we don't sell many CDs at all. I think there is some impact, although for punk records, I think it's much less than other genres. But there is an impact for sure. There are plenty of people these days who don't even have a record player, where that used to not be true. One positive thing about digital music—it's a great way to hear a band, and then go out and buy their record.

MRR: Is vinyl the punk preferred format... is it industry-proof?

Bryan A: I like vinyl, but who knows? If the fad of vinyl dies down and pressing plants start failing and the cost of plastic goes up...maybe MP3s will be the low-cost, no-frills way to reach the punks.

Rana: Yeah, those little petroleum discs are here to stay. Something about vinyl—I don't what it is.

MRR: OK, let's talk about the punk scene in Minneapolis...what's the scene like, what bands are coming out of there that someone should take note of?

Brad: The local scene is pretty righteous. Pretty killer and diverse stable of bands and most shows are chilled out, but not totally dead. Most shows don't happen in lame clubs or bars, which is great. My favorite local bands are Scaphe, Kontrasekt, Frozen Teens, Varix, Claps and Cokskar. Also, look out for Fucking because they rage.

Rana: My current favorites are Zero, Kontrasekt, Ripsnorter, Warplague. There are a ton of good bands in the Twin Cities!

Shivaun: I really like Wild Forest, for new bands. The Total Trash 7" that came out last year is so killer and I feel like it flew under the radar. Same with the Varix 7" on Fashionable Idiots.

Bryan A: Like all scenes, it has more active periods and then slower times. I think we are lucky to have the store as a core for people to meet and check out music and find fliers, etc.

Ryan: The scene is strong despite the loss of some major DIY venues in the last year. There are always new punk-houses popping up to host shows. The bars aren't too bad and even places like Seward Cafe are back to doing shows on a regular basis. I think people should definitely take note of newer bands like Casual User, Uranium Club, Fucking and Zero.

MRR: I know Extreme Noise does more for the scene more than being a record store, what type of stuff does the collective get involved with?

Rana: Well, we've sponsored various events, sponsored shows, given money to charitable causes that most of the collective can agree on, Monday free shows at Triple Rock, certain shows, movie screenings, Boneshaker Books...

Bryan A: We look at our profits as property of the Twin Cities scene, so we try to use it to help punk-related projects as much as we can. Over the years, we've bought PA equipment for a show collective, lent money to a print shop that was printing record covers, run ads in local zines, we used to sponsor a local punk radio show, sponsored Punk Rock Bowling tournaments, various festivals, anarcho book fairs, and the Sound Unseen music film festival and we've sponsored a lot of shows over the years.

Shivaun: We sponsor all sorts of events around town. We work with Sound Unseen every year—they put on a cool music-related film festival at a couple different theaters around town. We sponsor readings at Boneshaker Books, all sorts of things.

Brad: Lots of different shows, radio programs.

MRR: Do you think Extreme Noise has really impacted the scene? Would the Minneapolis punk scene have been what it was in the '90s—I mean, after all, it was the punk mecca of the US—would the scene have survived the 2000s and come out strong into the current state its in? Ya know what I mean? What impact has the store had?

Bryan A: I doubt everyone would agree that we were the mecca, but we did draw a lot of punks in the '90s and things were pretty active. That's a tough question... I think the activity of the '90s helped show us what was possible, and since some of us are still around now, we didn't forget that. The store is a constant reminder that not all things the punk scene builds have to fall to shit after a year or two.

Rana: Music is important to the punk scene, and although Extreme Noise is not, say, a hang-out place or anything, it is a place that people go, can count on, can get involved in, etc. Its easy to keep up with what's going on—upcoming shows, meet people that are into the same shit you are into, etc. I guess people could argue that you can have that kind of community space on the internet, but fuck that—it's totally different. This is real, and people who are in this scene know that. Think about this—you can come here and buy the demo of the band you saw in someone's basement the other night!

Brad: I really wasn't around for those transitional years, but I can say that the store offers a way to stay involved in the scene even if you don't like going to shows or bars or whatever. I'm not that into going to too many show these days, but I can stay involved through the store. It helps give the scene a different dimension or mode of existence, which, for a lot of people I think, extends and deepens their "punk lives."

Ryan: Definitely the store has impacted the scene here. Kids that grew up here had access to so much music and community that took me years to find back where I am from. I can't think of anywhere I would rather live or any punk scene I would rather be a part of. I believe that there is far less segregation and disregard towards other subgenres of punk in the Twin Cities because of Extreme Noise. There is really no doubt that having the store present for this time has helped build and foster a truly world-class punk scene in the Twin Cities.

Sean: I think with the decline of zine culture in punk, volunteering at the record store is one of the remaining ways in town to contribute to the scene outside of playing in bands or promoting or running a label, which just makes for a more inclusive and cohesive scene. It has helped make the city a more connected place, in my opinion. I think without it, many bands would have never happened and less people would have been drawn to this city in the first place.

MRR: Now it's 2014, why is this year so important for Extreme Noise?

Shivaun: It's our 20th anniversary! That's crazy! Minneapolis is no doubt a really cool town, but one of the coolest thing I've seen come out of it is sustained support for DIY/collective projects. We have tons of cooperative/collective businesses and projects that have been around since the hippie era, and I like to see us as part and parcel of the spirit of communalism and cooperation that is borne out of Midwestern rural life. Really! Obviously we wouldn't have lasted this long if we got paid and had to make actual shrewd business decisions, but it's still pretty impressive.

Rana: Holy shit, how did we make it so long and how did I get so old?!

MRR: Speaking of the '90s, there was a really kick ass show last weekend...wanna talk about it?

Bryan A: Well, I think it had more significance to us old farts who were there in the '90s, and was maybe a bit of a head-scratcher for the younger punks, but... The idea was to try to celebrate the really active early-to-mid-'90s scene from which Extreme Noise was born. This scene was best illustrated by the No Slow...All Go! compilation that came out in '96, so we had all the bands we could get from that comp to play: Oswald Armageddon, Quincy Punx, Code 13, Bombsite, Kung Fools, Scooby Don't, Dirt Poor, Man Afraid, Threadbare, The Strike, and Dillinger 4. It ended up being more like a punk rock high school reunion and all the bands were surprisingly good. It was a pretty amazing couple of shows, and we had food, cake, and also showed When We Play For Real, a documentary about that scene by Patti Rhodes from '96.

Rana: It was great! Many of the bands reunited to play that weekend. It was really amazing and overwhelming to see so many people who have moved away, people I used to hang out with, or bands I had seen many times, in so many basements. There couldn't have been a better kick off to our anniversary.

Brad: The shows were great. I slammed to Code 13 (I tried to resist, but "Spokesman for No One" got me into the pit) and I ate way too many cupcakes.

MRR: And what's in the future plans for the anniversary? There are more festivities to be had, right?

Bryan A: June 21 and 22 we will be having another weekend of shows. These will be in a large tent and feature Los Crudos, Organism, Cleveland Bound Death Sentence, Banner Pilot, Mean Jeans, Iron Lung, Lebenden Toten, Radioactivity, Frozen Teens and Condominium. A Saturday after show will have Question, Gasrag, Kontrasekt, Pillage, and Varix. A nearby after show will feature Bad Sports and others. There will be a record swap, games, giveaways, etc. $5 at the door per day! October 4 and 5, we do it again at the local VFW. Bands and details to be announced later!

Ryan: Huge tent. Carnival-type atmosphere and some of the best punk and hardcore the world has to offer. It's not to be missed!

Shivaun: It'll be a big parking lot show with a dunk tank and a record swap and an art show and after-shows and other fun shit. We're also compiling an oral history zine, which should be out by June. We need more stories about crazy scores. Everyone has just been fixated on the time someone bought an OG Cows and Beer for $3.

Juicy: If you come to part two or part three, make sure you come down to the store on Saturday between 12-4 and eat pizza with us!!!

MRR: It's kick-ass and I'm stoked, but why such a celebration?

Juicy: Why not? 20 years!!! The store has been around for longer than most marriages.

Shivaun: If the April shows were for the old timers and the founders of the store, then the June and October shows are more for our current customers—not that there is no overlap! We hope to exhibit Bob Murderer's boot in a clear glass box as well. What other kind of event could present such an object with the proper gravitas?

Ryan: To show the world at large that DIY hardcore punk can be sustainable and a ton of fun to be a part of!!

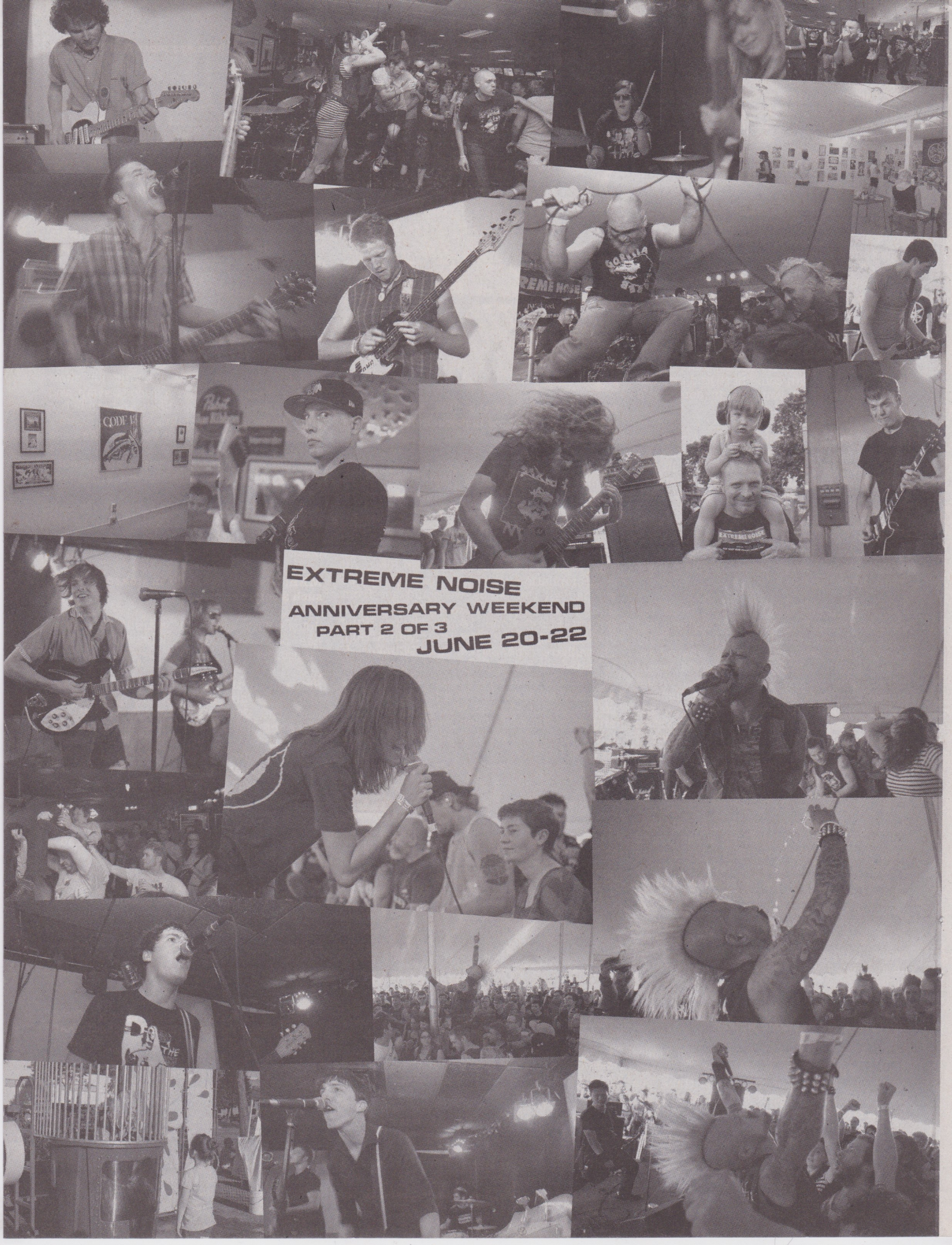
Brad: Although we don't make money like we used to, the store has some savings in the bank. What better way to spend it than throwing a party for all our long time customers and volunteers? Who knows if we will make another 5-10 years, so we should live it up while we can and celebrate having made it this far.

MRR: Anything fans of punk should know about Extreme Noise Records that I haven't asked?

Juicy: Umm...yes, we are the greatest punk rock record store in the world!!!

Brad: I believe we are the largest purveyor of Jolt Cola in the Midwest.

Shivaun: Extreme Noise is the best and everyone should come buy records and come to our shows.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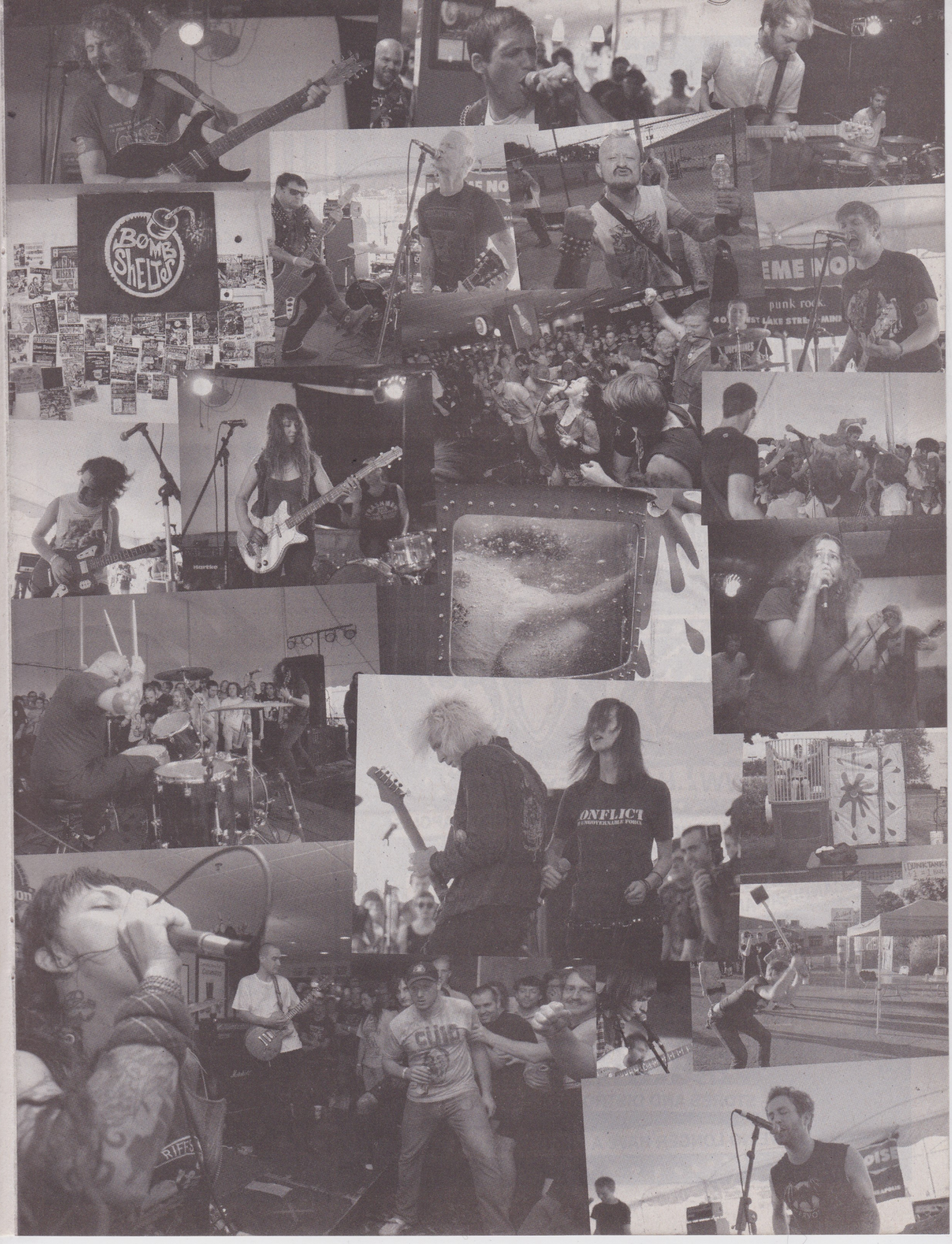
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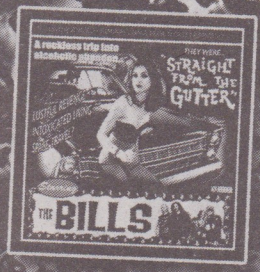

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EIEFITS

I was totally blown away by this awesome band from Tokyo just from seeing a video from what was actually one of their very first shows. Thanks to that I got caught in their spiderweb of punky riffs and amazing vocals of Saho before they released their first 7". I did not focus on the extent of their exes (the Heck, Colored Ricemen, Forward, KGS, Lip Cream and Familyman); their music makes all this insignificant. When receiving their first 7", I jumped up from my chair. This is the band that has branded my dying heart. OK, let's have a look at it, as I don't want to reveal everything before the interview starts. I hope you go and buy their record after reading this and new power enters your days. Interview by Marek Gasmask. Photos by Fuyuki Kataoka.

MRR: What does Eiefits mean? Any crucial meaning in this name?
T.T.: Eiefits was a fishing team name.
Saho: Eyefits → Eiefits

MRR: Please say a few words about yourselves and the band!
Bass – Minoru, guitar – T.T.,
vocals – Saho, drums – Tamazo.

MRR: What does the name of your LP *493* mean? The lyrics have an anti-military chorus, but I do not understand the Japanese parts so I do not want to speculate. Is the whole album aimed against war?
Saho: The Japanese pronunciation is 4(shi) 9(ku) 3(mi). Shikumi means system in English. This song is about war. I want to say that war only profits a few people. War is only covered by sadness and lies for us. War is business. No mercy. No justice at all.
Minoru: You can express things with numbers in ancient Japanese. Each Japanese letter, not each word, has a meaning. And even numbers have energy. Maybe it's vestige or tradition. We still express things with numbers in Japan occasionally. Sometimes we use Japanese numbers as code language.

MRR: OK, can you tell more about your lyrics? Saho, are you the only member who writes lyrics or is it a collective work?
Saho: I write all lyrics. I write songs about absurdity in the world, about hope, love, plot, soul, vibration, human rights, negative/positive things.

MRR: Who makes the graphics? It is not complicated, but in its minimalism it is very engaging. Do graphics allow you to express those ideas which music cannot express?
Saho: I'm in charge of artwork. Minoru told me that, "You should express the message of shikumi". Then I made the jacket of *493*.

MRR: How is life in Japan for "adult punks"? After all, when people are young, they live their lives direct and straightforward. One looks at life in a much simpler, clearer way.
Minoru: Nothing much has changed other than having children.
T.T.: I'm getting old and I have many different experiences. But I haven't changed. I don't have a child. So I'm having an easy life.
Saho: I'm still developing.

MRR: What do you do apart from music? Saho, you once wrote me that you were very busy... Work, work, work?
Minoru: To me, life in Japan now looks harder and harder compared to when I was young. Work time for a living gets longer and longer no matter what. However, I enjoy doing something else for my mental health such as playing Herabuna (Heracrucina), fishing and travelling. Plus, I like playing Djembe.
T.T.: Herabuna Fishing!
Saho: Play with my cats, Herabuna fishing, ride a motorcycle, camp!!

MRR: Do punks have to reject all "traditions?" Do they drink tea? Is it just about drinking tea? What is your opinion on the Japanese tea ceremony? For example, here in Europe, our culture is totally different. Please tell us something more about the culture and history of Japan.
T.T.: Traditional Japanese culture is awesome! Everybody should watch the Japanese movie called *Otoko Wa Tsurai Yo!!*
Minoru: It's not that Japanese punks reject our traditional rituals; most of the Japanese now are losing our ancient culture and thought little by little, I believe. Although I wouldn't deny that Japanese punks reject some part of culture(s) that has been brought to us nowadays.
For example, the Japanese art of tea ceremony, which has existed before Christ, is a very old culture to us now. I know it has something deep to do with meditation and philosophy, but I do not know details about it. The very original way of thinking in Japan is something that

you think and fantasize about, something that you are going to experience for real through your own mind filter, that you believe is appropriate, which can be twisted if your filter is twisted. It is opposite from the current way of thinking that follows reality in the world.
Saho: I respect Japanese traditional culture. Every Japanese tradition has spiritual way.

MRR: Are you interested in the politics of your country? What do you think about anarchism, about political punk? Many years ago I got strongly influenced by the lyrics of Crass and I think that they are still very strong and inspiring even nowadays, 30 years later. But does punk need to carry only political topics?
T.T.: I'm not interested in politicians. But, I feel something weird through my own living. I hope we could express those feelings in the band.
Saho: Crass is a highly influential band for me too. Punks are always standing up to the craziness of government. I am interested in politics. And I'm worried about it. Politicians lost their moral principles because of their greed. Fascism, an official democracy. Manipulation, destroying evidence, changing the point of an argument.
Minoru: I am interested in politics, but the political situation reported superficially by media sounds untrue, I think. It gets in the way. I do not buy the political information that media reports. I still believe that the situation with "anarchy and chaos" is what humans should naturally be in. People have created this situation from act to act in history. Personally, I believe primitive communism suits the way people live.

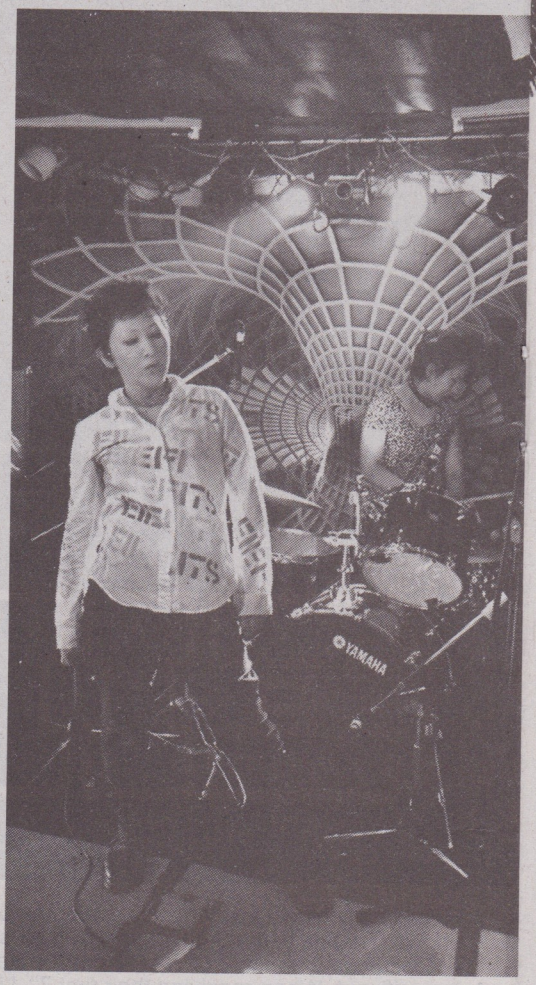
MRR: Can you tell me more about your local scene? The answer does not necessarily need to include just music—shops, magazines, venues, activism? Are the shows wild in your town? You play lots of gigs, how do you manage it all? Do you play gigs outside Tokyo too?
T.T.: Saitama, Tokyo music scene, some places liven up, some places do not.
Minoru: Nowadays in Japan, sales of records, CD's, magazines and stuff have declined drastically due to the influence of this internet culture? Audience size at live shows is getting smaller on average. However, I can say that our shows themselves are actually getting more exciting with the audience. We, Eiefits, only take care of the minimum management, but we have plans to play in Osaka, Kyoto, Nagoya.

MRR: Are you planning any tour? Any new recording coming soon?
T.T.: We are planning to do some recordings this year.

MRR: Gauze sing on one of their LPs that vegetarianism is a mere pose. Many people here could never understand their attitude, but the basis of my question is not Gauze, but your opinion on vegetarian diet. Are any of you vegetarian? Is it actually possible in Japan to eat fully vegetarian? What do you think about the idea that humanity can fully avoid the consumption of animals?
Minoru: Gauze and I are the same generation (I was born in 1962) and our parents' generation was like, they did not have enough to eat when they were growing up right after the WW2, like anyone else in the world back then. They struggled with food when they were young. So they taught us not to waste any food. Because we were brought up that way, all of the vegetarian movements in western countries just seem like too much to us. I am not vegetarian, but I believe in some ancient Japanese literatures such *A Record of Ancient Matters* (710), *hitsuki shinji* (words from spirits through mediums) and so on, saying what humans should eat are grain, vegetables, seaweeds, and never meat. However, due to my environment in this Japanese economic situation, I eat something reasonable such as meat no matter what. I have a sense of uncertainly about the global economy on this as well. You will have to have a specific environment in order to become vegetarian in Japan with the current situation. I actually have vegetarian friends, though. However, I hope this vegetarian movement will spread out and let the food supply, and mainly vegetables, get more reasonable for us to purchase. A lot of us. Eiefits grow some vegetables. Ancient Japanese ideas say grain and vegetables are great for mind and body. I hope the movement will spread around the world for mental and physical normality.
T.T.: We are not vegetarians.
Saho: I'm at one with Minoru. We need a minimum necessary amount of food.

MRR: I know that Minoru played in Lip Cream and T.T. played in Forward. Do you want to talk about your old days? (I love asking this question and I am always eager to hear the answer, because I like to learn about history. Of course, we live here and now, but the roots and ways towards today are sometimes good to know.)
Minoru: There was so much to remember from those days. Too much to mention here for a few words.
T.T.: I don't know about the old days, but I think in the scope of my experience, Japanese bands' performances are at high level, and there are a lot of cool bands around here.

MRR: Alright, let us get back to the lyrics. You have your lyrics combined and I do not speak Japanese. What is the song "Die In The End" about? About life? About work? I did not want to speculate, but the last sentence is very interesting: "I'm looking for time value. Die in the end."
Saho: "Die In The End" is about our life. In the chorus, we're singing "Dai Ji Ni Ne." It's Japanese. It means "Take good care of yourself". The Japanese word "Daiji" is "important" in English. Take good care of yourself, enjoy yourself, because our life



is valuable. Dai ji ni ne, because we die in the end.

MRR: OK, we're also at the end. I hope to meet you some day at your concerts here in the Czech Republic. Please say something in conclusion, here is an unlimited space for your expression.
Minoru: I strongly hope that the world economical gaps will disappear someday so that we can travel to various countries more easily. We would like to visit Czech Republic, too. Last but not least, we pray for the future without wars. The international system includes risks of wars. Possibilities of wars happening have a lot to do with interests among the people who run the world, but it can all depend on each one of us, the way we think. We need to get out of the way of thinking how to judge things, if they are good or bad, which has been going on inside our heads for the last 3,000 years. And I would like to look at things with the third eye of mine all the time from this sense of the middle of yes and no.
Saho: I just put my heart and soul into Eiefits. And I do believe our positive vibration changes things. Good relationships with the whole world. No war, no nukes, no hunger, no discrimination, no gap-widening society. We just need great friends, family, good music, happy hour!! KANPAI!!
T.T.: I don't know what's going on in the rest of my life. I just want to have some fun!

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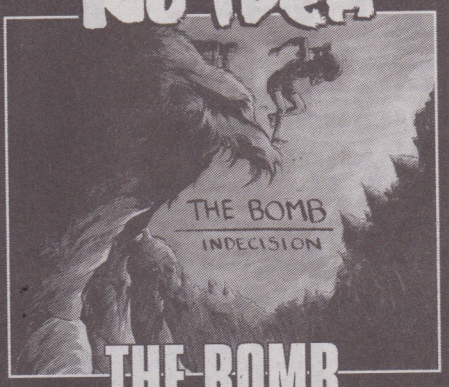

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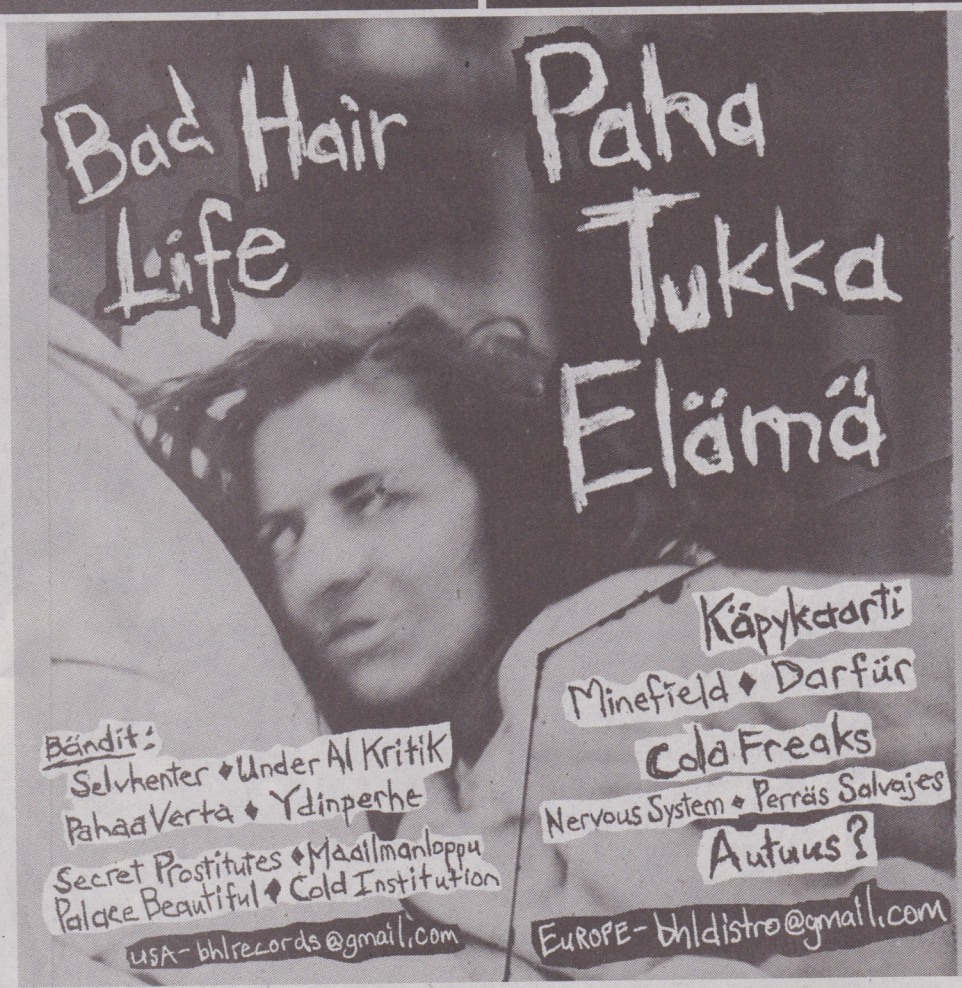

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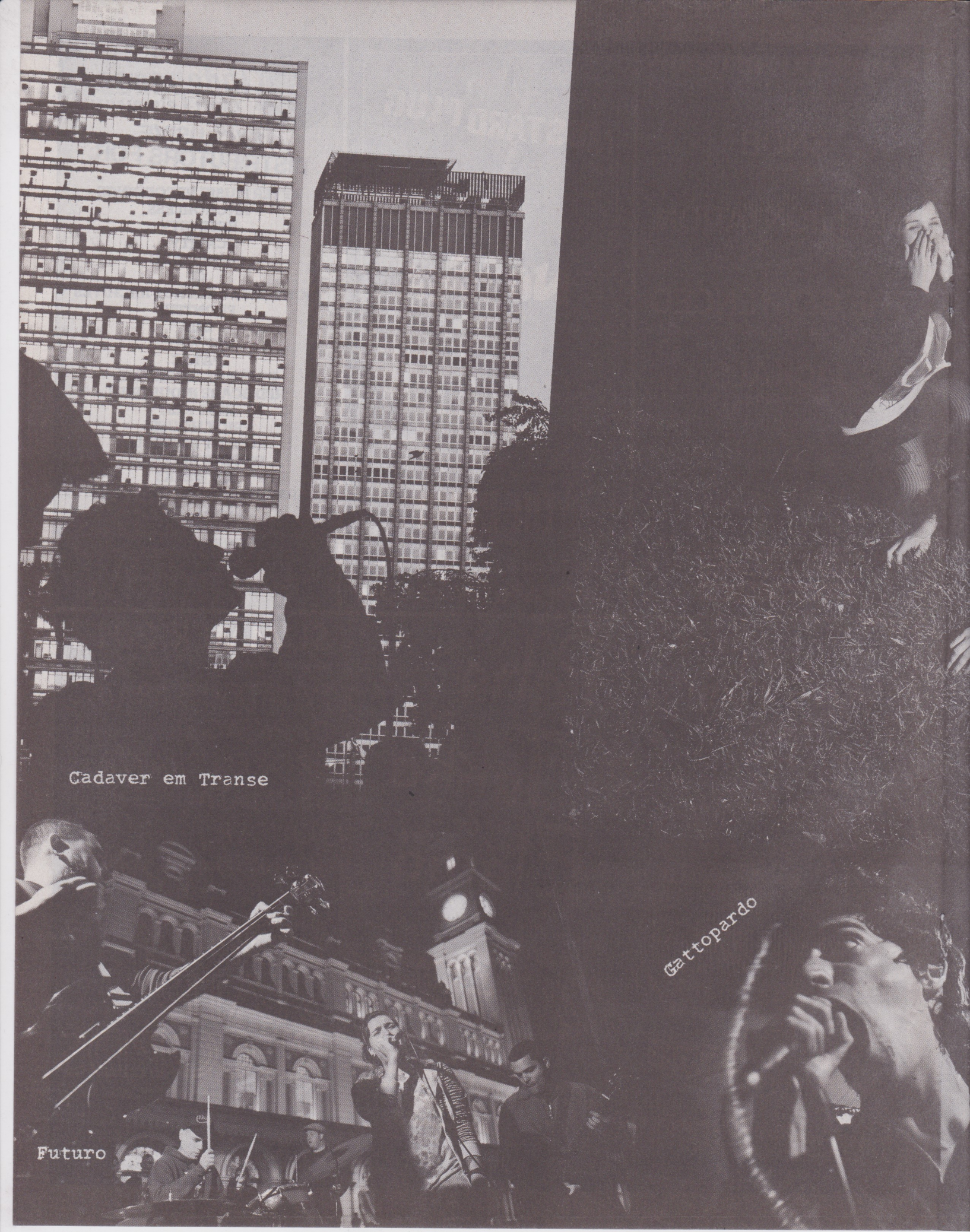
Cadaver em Transe
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"Rakta em Transe"

Rakta

BRING YOUR
SUBSCRIPTION
BACK FROM
THE
DEAD
MAXIMUM
ROCKNROLL
1982
TO

I decided to interview Una Bèstia Incontrolable *because it's a band that has really stirred up a lot of questions and curiosities in me.*

On top of being a project that is quite different than what we're used to, the lyrics in "Observant com el món es destrueix" along with the whole aesthetic of the band manages to construct a cohesive and strong philosophical message.

Despite this, Una Bèstia Incontrolable *harbors an ambiguity and mystery that fascinates me, and this is what we'll try to get at in the interview. Let's get to it.*

Intro and Interview by Bernat Mundial. Photos by Elsa Cambra Fosca and Fidel Gutiérrez. Translation by Lena Tahmassian.

UNA BÈSTIA INCONTROLABLE

MRR: Una Bèstia Incontrolable was born towards the end of 2012. You actually debuted in November at the Static Shock Weekend in London with a demo tape under your belts. A few months later you put out your LP *Observant Com el Món es Destrueix* and you did a tour with Glam and Crazy Spirit for ten days on the East Coast. What were your objectives and expectations when you started the band and what was your thought process when you decided to begin playing together?

Dani: When we first started the project, we were all playing in other bands. With Guillem I was playing in Atentado, and with Roca, the first drummer of Una Bèstia Incontrolable, I was playing in Glam. We felt like doing something different that wasn't tied down to a particular style.

Xavi: Bringing in more noise and other elements we hadn't used until now.

Guillem: I remember that with Destino Final things had slowed down and Atentado seemed like the same story, Dani and I felt like doing something new.

Xavi: We were all at a point where we felt like trying new things and experimenting. We were all in other bands, I was playing in Crosta, but after a few months these projects all ended and we all focused more on La Bèstia.

Guillem: At the beginning we didn't have any specific goals or expectations, we started a band to improvise and experiment in. Since day one things meshed well.

Dani: It was easy for us to write songs, they came out really fast and we got really motivated. In a few weeks we had the demo done.

Xavi: During this time we had a ton of practices for a lot of hours. The songs pretty much wrote themselves.

MRR: It's pretty obvious that Una Bèstia Incontrolable has tried to do something different, look for a more open sound and experiment with rhythms... you've mentioned to me in the past that during your practices you spent a lot of time improvising. How do you feel about making music that way? Did this free feeling scare you at any point? Have you ever thought, "damn, we're losing it"?

Dani: That's what I like most about the band, meet up to practice and switch it up, without expecting things to come out the way they do.

Guillem: I've always thought the band has a kind of free style. I've been playing in hardcore bands for a while and there are always bands that influence you or that you have as a referent. In this band I felt like doing hardcore without any particular model in mind.

Xavi: During the time we were starting I was playing in Destral, which was an ambient/psychedelic noise project where the songs had no defined structure. It felt really interesting to start a punk band with a focus that was different to the other punk bands I had played in.

Guillem: We've always just wanted to play what we've felt like without worrying about what other people think.

Xavi: In fact, on the demo, as well as with the first record, we were a little unsure about some of the things we had recorded, but it was stuff that we liked a lot and we decided to include them on the recordings.

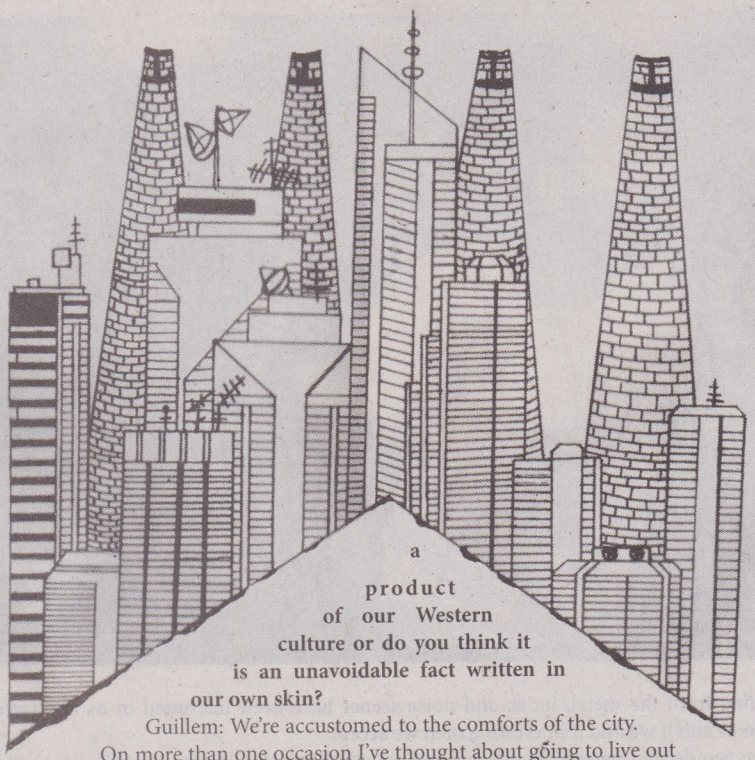
MRR: I consider your music experimental but nevertheless one can tell that you're coming from bands like Glam, Destino Final, and even Crosta. Aside from hardcore, what other kinds of music do you listen to in order to create what you've been creating? In "La Primera Foguera" the drums kind of have a reggaeton sound and overall there are some touches of sludge, right?

Dani: Grunge, stoner, psychedelia, punk, noise, industrial, flamenco, or Mediterranean music are some styles that could be influencing us when we write songs.

Xavi: I have my reservations about the use of the word "experimental", I think all music that isn't a copy of something preexisting could be considered experimental.

Guillem: The drums do a lot of protagonizing in the band, we've always tried to find rhythms that are different and more dancey. I love reggaeton rhythms, when I listen to "La Primera Foguera" I can't help but move my body and I can feel how the primitive human that inhabits me wants to come out and thump its wooden club and invoke destruction, ha ha.

MRR: On the cover of your LP there are some farmers reaping grain in a valley, and on the back cover a volcano is erupting lava, which lays waste to everything. Your lyrics speak of nature, a nature that we live conflictingly. We are children of the mountains, we are survivors from the first bonfire, we feel a weird nostalgia when we hear birds sing, but this nature is also foreign to us, unknown and frightening, as in disease or even death. How do you explain this conflict? Do you think it's



a product of our Western culture or do you think it is an unavoidable fact written in our own skin?

Guillem: We're accustomed to the comforts of the city. On more than one occasion I've thought about going to live out in the country in order to feel freer, to have a freer life out in nature in search of tranquility. But that's just the thing, idealizing what we don't have, it seems we're never happy with what we have or we aren't capable of seeing the good in things. Living in the city, everything seems like shit and oftentimes you think, "it'd be great to live out in the mountains", but losing our comfort scares us. I guess it's nostalgia for the past, seeing human evolution and the associated resolve to change his/her surroundings, living in the technological world, where we are always suffering from new psychological ailments. I'd like to be able to have a more simple life, without so much social pressure. But I'm saying this in my house, from in front of a Mac with an internet connection.

Xavi: In some of our songs nature is used as a context which generates fear, there are pursuits and anguish, it's a violent and death-filled scene. But, there's also an aesthetic representation of the desire for freedom that we all feel. Being unable to understand the unknown is where these fears originate.

MRR: What's your opinion on the mind/body division? Do you believe in spirits or energies? What do you think about all of that Eastern spiritualism which seems to be gaining popularity and is in style in our Western surroundings?

Xavi: That stuff is in style?

Dani: Yeah, isn't it? It's fashionable to do yoga, meditation...

Xavi: Yoga has something to do with spirits?

Dani: Doesn't it? It's a relaxation technique, but I'm actually not too sure. The truth is that none of us are into that spiritual shit.

Xavi: I don't believe in anything that goes beyond what science can show me, I don't believe in other stuff, nor am I interested in it.

Guillem: It happens to me everyday, when I smoke weed by brain goes to shit ha ha.

MRR: To me the lyrics of "El Cant Dels Ocells" convey that in the city, as well as in the wild, people feel unsatisfied and incomplete. Do you think that we are condemned to have these feelings?

Dani: I think that these feelings are part of the human essence.

Xavi: Humans aren't a type of animal, which has its own specific habitat. Humans have a great capacity for adapting themselves to environments and modifying them. Feeling unsatisfied or incomplete is not a characteristic of one specific environment. Whether it's humans thousands of years ago in their context, or whether it's in our cities or towns, humans are all capable of feeling desperation out of not being able to fit into their environment.

Guillem: We're all condemned by our feelings. It's easy to feel incomplete or to get frustrated in the world we live in. It's easy to fall into depression or selfishness, when you see how fucked up the world is and how little we love each other. Life is a sentence because nobody has chosen it. Many times in my life I've felt those feelings that push you down into the bottom of the pit and because of that I try to be as positive as possible and see things from another point of view.

Dani: The environment we live in affects us. I think about my family, my grandfather who came to the city looking for something more, he got an apartment in the city and later on he fought to get a better one. I don't know if this has always been the case in past generations, the need to improve your life. I believe that the moment we're living in now, we've been raised with this notion; to be born into a position and when we've reached the end of our lives, to feel that we've improved our situation—if you keep up with this idea, you're never going to be happy.

MRR: Prometheus stole fire from the gods to give it to man, Prometheus provided us with that first bonfire of which you claim to be the disciples, that's why they chained him up. How do you feel about the progression of human skills? What's your opinion on homo-sapiens? In the song "La Primera Foguera" there is no ethical of political positioning in terms of human specialization and skill development, which I think is great, but what's your opinion on this? Is there a limit?

Xavi: "La Primera Foguera" may seem to have an ambiguous message because of what it says and the context it uses, but it's a song that talks about how technological and scientific knowledge is transmitted generation after generation throughout our species' history. Technological knowledge can't be reversed, but this can be considered a good thing because this is the way in which human beings evolve, not just through biology like other species, and this makes us distinct.

Guillem: Those lyrics also talk about stuff related to the previous question.

Xavi: Yeah, the song talks about other things. It's really hard to know the limits of technology or development or to even know if this exists. In any case, there can be a moral limit or one prompted by a political view.

Dani: Worst-case scenario, the limit of technology is self-destruction of the human race.

Xavi: And of the planet. And this is already happening.

Guillem: In some ways, the cover of the record tries to reflect that as well. There are some peasants farming and a volcano erupts and destroys everything, like this huge self-destructive machine that is the human species.

"But that's just the thing, idealizing what we don't have, it seems we're never happy with what we have or we aren't capable of seeing the good in things."

MRR: Who or what is this *bèstia* (beast)?
Dani: You could say that the bèstia is the world itself, nature, humanity. We've never tried to actually explain what it is exactly.
Guillem: The name was a joke at first during band practice, but later, thinking about the potential interpretations of its meaning, we liked it. Una bèstia incontrolable (an uncontrollable beast) could be any of us, it's the beast that you carry inside that wants to come out and destroy everything.
Xavi: Often we represent nature as something utopian, but nature includes natural disasters and forces that escape our control. When my mom talks to me about Gods I tell her that I don't believe in that stuff, but she's not talking about a God in a religious sense, she tells me that Nature has forces that escape our control, and that's what she's referring to. For me that could be the uncontrollable beast, and also the elements of fear some our songs refer to.
Dani: In conclusion, una bèstia incontrolable is God.
Letxon: It could be anything from poverty, war, or even an earthquake. I also think that the name of the band is interpretable. It could be anything; it doesn't have to be anything physical. It could be the name of a lot of things.

MRR: All of you have spent many years forming part of the Barcelona punk scene, your bands are well known, however it seems that with La Bèstia, in some way you're looking to escape the "restrictions" of the scene. Your audience isn't limited just to punk listeners. In fact not too long ago you played in the CCCB (Center of Contemporary Culture of Barcelona).
Dani: Just because we mix musical influences and play shows outside of the scene doesn't mean that we intend to distance ourselves from the scene. People from different scenes have invited us to play their shows since they like our music and taking them up on it has been a point of interest for us.
Xavi: People coming from the metal, indie, and noise scenes have been interested in us and have proposed shows to us and if we find it interesting then we accept.
Dani: I've also seen people who weren't previously familiar with the punk scene start getting interested in it because of punk bands that have played to an audience outside of their scene.
Xavi: Talking about CCCB, we had the opportunity to play in that space with the freedom to create the line-up based on what we felt like doing, under the umbrella of "experimental music and underground bands", so we picked Coàgul (Barcelona) and Pharmakon (NYC). We set up a show where all three projects played one after the other, including mutual collaborations amongst all of us. The experience was really interesting for us, even though we felt a little out of place.
Guillem: It was awesome collaborating with Pharmakon and Coàgul during those two weeks, working together and learning from each other. It was one of the most enriching experiences for the band.

MRR: I know you've recorded new songs that are going to be ready for your US tour. What are the new songs about? Are they still along the lines of the conflict between nature/civilization? How do you want the new material to be?
Xavi: The record is conceptually different, it wasn't very planned. It's a 7" that Iron Lung Records is going to put out. The theme and aesthetic of this EP is more cyberpunk and industrial.
Dani: This year we've put a lot more time into constructing our practice space and recording studio than songwriting. Aside from the 7" that Iron Lung is releasing, we have two more songs recorded with Pharmakon. The idea was to have the second LP ready for this next tour, but we haven't had that much time to write.
Xavi: In some ways during this last year we've hit our stride in defining our live sound. We've been writing a lot of songs, some of which we tossed out and others which we saved in order to see if we'll use them for future recordings, but the only songs that are totally done are the ones on the 7", which we are very stoked on.

MRR: In the insert of your first record there is a picture of a *hito* (a literal milestone: stone piling which indicates a trail). It seems like you put it there to suggest that we're lost and that this *hito* indicates a path—or perhaps it's just my personal interpretation. Were you trying to say something with this *hito*? Which do you think is the path?
Guillem: While we were finishing the art on the record I saw that our friend Iru had done a photo set of stone *hitos* that I liked a lot. They reminded me of when I was little and went hiking in the mountains. It's something really primitive that is still used today to orient us on the mountain trails. We don't know which path to follow, we feel lost because of not having options or having too many options. The *hito* is a very expressive image that represents how lost we are in this world and the uncertainty of everything.

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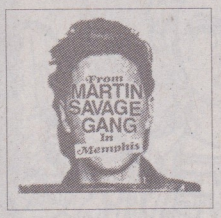

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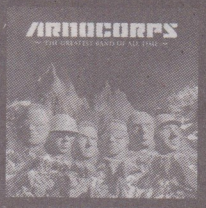

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COOL DEATH RECORDS

DRIBBLE

Cool Death is a young hardcore punk label based in Melbourne, Australia. They recently released the Gutter Gods LP, a monster of a record who should leave some kind of slimy, bloody mark on hardcore 2014. Picture, if you will, a skinhead sounding hardcore band bad tripping on acid, something for people who dig both the Fix and the Fugs. Sickest guitar sound this side of Puffy Areolas? Check. Nightmarish visions of a bunch of meatheads joining a Manson-inspired cult? Check. Violent clapping?! Check. If your mind's not fried after spinning this one, try the new Velvet Whip tape, which they sell as sounding "a bit like Siege's Drop Dead *and Hawkwind's* Space Ritual *played at the same time." Right. With the same fucked up vibe in the label's other bands – Soma Coma, Dribble, Leather Lickers – this all starts to sound like the logical conclusion of a decade worth of bands like Destino Final or Crazy Spirit or Lebenden Toten pushing the sonic boundaries of this rusty old thing we call hardcore. Here's what these guys had to say for themselves, for those who've always wished Siege had written more than just one* Grim Reaper. *Intro and interview by Alexandre Simon. Photos by Drew Bennett, Sigourney Ormston, Jess* Bad Teeth *zine. Cool Death Records is Tom Bradford, Dave Moses and Alessandro Coco.*

MRR: What were the motivations behind starting Cool Death? Do you see it as a business, something fun to do to kill time, a passion?

Bradford: There was the typical "start your own label to release your own band" story coupled with other aspects. Me and Coco were still runnin' hot on inspiration from a trip to the States the previous year and wanted to start building something in Melbourne. It wasn't like Melbourne's hardcore punk scene needed to be saved by a coupla gung-ho kids like us – this city always does alright for itself, it was more just us wanting to get off the sidelines and add our own flavor to what was already being done well. I've began to see this label as a way to create a world within a world. Society, youth culture and everything else is on a sharp decreasing plane of mediocrity. There's no place left for ideas, creativity or anything that isn't e-friendly. It's a reaction to those things and the sheer stupidity of the real world.

Moses: I guess the whole climate of music consumption has changed drastically over the years. There is no doubting that Australia has a rich history of important bands and looking back to pre-internet days those bands would have needed to rely heavily on overseas labels to push their music. I feel that this mentality still exists somewhat within Australian bands. They're always looking to shop their music to overseas labels. Like Bradford and Cokes, I also held a bit of a flame for doing something in Melbourne after visiting the States... With obvious exceptions, it became apparent that our scene was stronger than most places I went… Yet, most bands here would leap at the opportunity to have some herb they'd never met put out their record based largely on the fact they live in New York or LA… Maybe it's a lack of choice here? Who knows? But basically I wanted to start something here that was on par or better than shit going on over in America or Europe, so bands like the Zingers don't have their mental record sitting on the shelf for two fucken years while they find someone over there to do it. I always wanted to do something where a band like Power said, "hey we recorded on the weekend" and we can launch into getting it out as soon as possible. There's a ton of shit fucken labels out there run by absolute drongos. I don't want, nor think this will ever fall into that category and I guess to keep it from happening ya have to approach it as a business, at the very basic level at least.

Coco: I very much dig loud guitar music. I feel that we just had to start releasing music that was happening around us because it had to be captured and paid proper attention to. It's an extension of my interest in music;

being able to help facilitate the cool shit we hear around us and make things happen.

MRR: Has there been a lot of interest in the label since its start? Has it been gradual? Is there no interest at all?
Bradford: Gradual. I feel people started paying attention once the Velvet Whip tape got spread around—that was an arresting recording. The Gutter Gods LP took that to another level, tape labels seem to squander in obscurity—seems you've "arrived" once you release a record. The level of US/European interest has been welcomed but I think we're at the peak of a period where Australian underground music is being viewed on a disproportionate pedestal.
Moses: I don't know. Accolades and interest in labels is kinda dumb. Labels are only going to be as good as the bands you release. It's all the bands. All we can do is make sure everything looks and sounds good and is distributed well. We've made some mistakes, but the new few releases in the catalog will be done better.
Coco: Thankfully people seem to vibe on what we do. It's nice to feel that we aren't wasting our efforts and having people interested in our label means that we can open a few more proverbial doors with what we do.

MRR: Who's Cool Death and how old are you guys, what do you do for a living? Usually small labels tend to be one-person operations, so I was wondering what made you decide to run a label as a "team" and what are the pros and cons of this.
Bradford: I'm 23 and work at a fruit and veg shop and just quit school for the third time. No plans to make a living til I've exhausted myself completely on Cool Death/playing in bands. Me and Coco had been chums for a long time, and shared a similar taste in music/aesthetics—the two us doing the label together was never even a question. Moses was rocking in Soma Coma and made a point of letting us know he was stoked on what we were working at. I dunno if he suggested it or we asked him to join us but we figured he was a hell cunt and was on the same page as us so him joining seemed natural. Pros: delegation/pooled capital. Cons: delegation/pooled capital.
Moses: Yeah I'd just done the Soma Coma tape and Dribble played the launch. It was their first show and I approached Texas Tom (Dribble Crooner) and told him I wanted to do a tape or something. It just happened from there ya know, teaming up with Tom and Co... I am 28 and work an office job where I've been distributing my other band's records secretly out of the top drawer of my desk for the past few years. I guess labels have drawbacks... frankly it can be a total shit of a thing to do—we've had tape duplication fuck ups, mis-quotations on things, people dicking us around with payments etc., etc., but it's all pretty rewarding when you open a box of shiny LPs and they look fucking sick.
Coco: I just turned 24 and I haven't had a job for a long time, so I spend my days and nights reading about weird shit and appreciating nature. Doing the label together as a team feels right for us, it feels like being in a band. Usually when one of us has an idea it seems like it's exactly what the other boys also wanted to do, so you know you're on the right track.

MRR: Does the label only aim to release bands that at least one of you play in?
Bradford: Nuh, that cherry was popped with the Velvet Whip tape and will continue to run red with Power and some others we've got stashed in our pipe.
Coco: The only rule is "*cool*," man.

MRR: Cool Death is named after a Crazy Spirit song, and you mentioned in another interview feeling inspired after going to NYC and seeing a CS/Hank Wood/Perdition gig, with "fireworks being let off and chairs being thrown," etc. Sounds kinda odd to me, to find inspiration in another country when you live in Australia, which seems to have one of the best punk/music scenes in the world right now. Any thoughts? Aren't there things to be inspired by in Melbourne? What's the difference between what you saw in New York and a hardcore gig in Australia with, say, Straightjacket Nation headlining?
Bradford: Like any other worldwide

SOMA COMA

happening music scene, it doesn't feel overtly happening to those within it. You still sit on your arse for three weekends of the month waiting for a gig that'll really set ya heart alight. I could go see hardcore and punk bands two-three nights of the week here and not go home thinking it was a better decision than if I'd stayed in and watched the football. There's an over-saturation here and our proverbial wicket-keeper is the United States and Europe who swallow and *believe* anything Australian. The only inspiration is the off chance you have to endure a set from one of the hundreds of bleak bands lurking this city and figure you could probably get a whole lot less applause than them. Probably not a huge difference between what we saw in NY and a well attended/well sauced crowd at an SJN gig here, but they are an anomaly within Australia.

Moses: When you see what's going on via the internet and also get that chance to visit some places in the States and Canada it really highlights our inadequacies—in particular, having a deep and diverse pool of bands to see each month and the amount of people who get out to shows. I certainly don't see it as being odd to find inspiration from a vibrant scene like that...Of course things are on track to being a pretty healthy "scene" here. I'm not going to shit on Melbourne and say it's bleak. New bands are starting to pop up, but I guess it appears to be unfolding slowly when you don't get the constant influx of touring bands like New York, LA, Chicago etc., etc. We have to settle for touring bands like fucken Disturd once in a blue moon—when tours are happening all the time around fests like Chaos in Tejas, New York's Alright and Not Dead Yet.

Coco: There's plenty of inspiration all around us. That trip to America was a breath of fresh air for me, it left me feeling that I had to do something when I got home, and I saw the same thing in Tom, so we felt like we were both in it together.

MRR: There's a rather arty vibe to the junk you put out, both in terms of aesthetics/ artwork and music. I mean Velvet Whip and Gutter Gods for instance sound like hardcore for sure, but with a psychedelic vibe and space everything, guitar sounds, recordings, artwork, etc. Are any of you art school dropouts or interested into other forms of art than punk? I feel like for a long time the "arty" tag was something rather frowned upon by hardcore crowds, and I'm wondering if that's starting to change.

Bradford: No art school dropouts to speak of. Each band takes care of their own art/layouts so I can't speak for all the Cool Death bands here. I'd like to think of the artwork for our releases to be a result of an attention paid to aesthetic—not so much a focus on or big appreciation of art itself. Sure, I like the look of things here and there but I certainly ain't a consumer/critic of visual art. I mean, with the Dribble CS we just got a copy of a Velvet Underground record, lit it on fire and took a photo of it. There was no artistic intention there, it was just a dumb idea we wanted people to interpret however they wanted. I think you're right about attitudes in punk towards art changing but I feel what we're seeing now is actually more of a throwback to the first wave of punk art, rather than progressing. I mean, look at the Cramps and Misfits singles—there is undivided attention on those layouts towards being aesthetically pleasing and looking *cool*. I honestly think that's what it could come down to—people going back to basics, fucking off bold computer generated layouts and instead realizing punk records looked substantially better before the interference of photoshop.

Coco: I dig all sorts of visual art, and I'm a real sucker for groovy, old

VELVET WHIP

psychedelic rock record art. I'm of the opinion that things worth listening to should look good (or at least the right kind of bad.) There's an endless sea of shit out there that when I see it I really wonder what in God's name these morons were thinking. We would like to avoid that sort of mediocrity.

MRR: Do the terms "psychedelic hardcore" or "space-punk" make you think of anything, or just laugh and shrug it off? Do you think it's important for a label/band to try and start something new, or can the past just be repeated forever?

Bradford: Yeah I mean, typically psychedelic music has been married with hallucinatory drugs—within that ya can have a good trip or a bad trip. Bands like Gutter Gods/Oily Boys/Velvet Whip who seem to have been tagged with those labels the most have coincidently made music that could be the soundtrack to a bad trip. I honestly didn't think it would be possible to do something original within music until Nathan Williams started to come into his own as a guitarist right before my eyes. That fella's guitar tone and style has effectively steered the whole Cool Death sound. Now I've seen band after band in this little scene *do* something different and I'm starting to wonder whether throwback bands are a total cop-out?

Coco: To me the idea of psychedelic hardcore is fucking great. It can be cool to explore and play with boundaries but it's also cool to stay classic.

MRR: Tell us more about each band on the label. Does each of them share members with the others?

*Answers split up to avoid any of us describing a band we play in.

Bradford: SOMA COMA – Psychotic sums 'em up within a word. First few recordings were on the straight and narrow but they've come into their own with the new jams. Siege holidaying in Italy. Share a drummer with Velvet Whip and a guitarist with Leather Lickers.

VELVET WHIP – Clean shirts playing hideously uplifting hardcore whilst dragging that clean shirt through the dirt. Not unlike Dry Rot or *Grim Reaper*. Beginning to incorporate saxophone and a second guitarist deeply rooted in jazz in their live show. Those who know *know*, that if this band makes it to a LP it will be one of the most devastating Australian musical outings in our short Colonial history.

POWER – It's early days but I'm hearing in them the NWOBHM, the Brats, Turbonegro and touches of Coloured Balls and the Aztecs when they lock into a jam. Two-track cassingle coming soon, followed by a LP later in the year, real exciting. Nathan (Gutter Gods/Dribble), Issac (Soma Coma/Leather Lickers) and Penke (Krömosom).

LEATHER LICKERS – Vocalist sounds dead-on like the shredder from the Mormons and musically they're also on a heavy Cleveland trip. The type of hardcore where r'n'r ain't forgotten. Just dropped a tape, newer stuff is sounding far darker.

Coco: DRIBBLE – Came about when their old band split up. They've taken a little bit of their old style, but it got more punk, and then it got more pop. When I watched them play the other night I realized that they're some sort of deformed Australian version of what the Ramones did. Nathan also riffed with Gutter Gods and now Power, and Bradford provided Gutter Gods' low frequencies.

Moses: GUTTER GODS – Deceased-but-not before they managed to spit out a tape and LP on Cool Death and inject some life into an unimaginative town. Channelling Brock, Barile and ball power, they set the bar high for the rest of the bands on Cool Death to play interesting music, worthy of repeat listens. Their demo probably fell short of their own expectations and it didn't come close to the sound they wanted and were capable of making. In the gap between the tape and LP, they payed meticulous attention to every part of Gutter Gods. They made a flawless transition to the long player in all aspects—production, post production and artwork. *Innersense*—a modern hardcore classic. Sorely missed.

MRR: The feeling I get from pictures of Gutter Gods is rather odd, looks like a bunch of teenage stoners fronted by some scary meathead, almost like two distinct bands rolled into one. How did the band get together? I think I've heard the LP would be the last release.

Bradford: Ya characterization is pretty spot-on. Myself, Nathan and Coco had been playing in a ruff 'n' tumble hardcore band called Kicked In, we'd only just replaced our old guitarist (the honorable John Paul Madigan) with Nathan before our vocalist hung up the boots. I figure we asked Allan from Reckless Aggression, as we knew he wasn't doing anything music-wise. It did feel that way at the start—a joining of two breeds. He had said to me at the first rehearsal that if he did a band again he'd still want to be Oi! influenced. I think once he saw the way Nathan could mangle a guitar that went out the window. We caught him at a time when he was open to trying something new and we grew cooked together—it felt natural the whole time, nothing had to be forced. The LP was set to be our last release but we agreed at my housewarming the other week to do another 7" of material we had lined up. We were drunk and Allan was sober so I think that'll stick.

MRR: I spent a year or so in Melbourne, years ago, and the feeling I got from hardcore punks over there was mostly apolitical, with some exceptions of course but... I feel like this question's out of place before even asking, but besides music, is there any cause you feel strongly about?

Bradford: I feel strongly about a lot of causes but none ain't worth spoutin' here nor anywhere. We're all fucked and it's not lookin' any brighter from here so why stress? Build a bubble. You're right, punks are largely apolitical here, aside from the typical contingent of the unwashed. Beer and watching sports seems to be the main bonding social glue outside of liking the same music for punks in Melbourne.

Coco: I care about the spiritual development of mankind.

MRR: Besides the Cool Death bands, what current OZ hardcore bands would you recommend?

Bradford: Oily Boys, Ripped Off, Simfuckers, Rort, Prag, Hävittäjät, RIP Fucker

Coco: Straightjacket Nation, Warthreat, Shirt Lifters.

MRR: What's next for the label?

Bradford: Power cassingle, Velvet Whip *Bronze Medallion* cassette, Dribble 7", Leather Lickers 7", Soma Coma 12" EP, and Maggot Fest in November again.

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GUTTERGODS

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VÉRTIGO

Punk stays alive in Barcelona

Although we get our places closed and the city council is making a lot harder to organize concerts. Although people don't give a shit and it's becoming almost impossible that three folks meet up to do something useful. Although the dreadful influence of the Internet, trends of all kinds and other scenes. Despite the mental drunkenness some people live weekend after weekend. We are still here, a little more skeptical than before but with the same enthusiasm as always.

And among all this shit, a new batch of bands has been born with power enough to sweep the bad vibes out of our heads. Origen, Demonios Salvajes, Siega, Invisibles, Arrest, Alerta! and Pena Máxima are some of its names. From all these projects, it's Vértigo's turn today. Vértigo kinda passes me good vibes. There is something about these guys that makes me feel like sitting down to talk with them and say "Hey, see, tell me whatever you want that I'll listen.".

They are people hardened by a thousand battles -some musical, some not-, playing melodic stuff that I'm unable to describe due to my total ignorance on this matter. The band started a few months ago, have just released their first k7, are going soon on an Iberic tour and already threaten with an LP. Let's get to the point and let them speak for themselves. Intro and questions by Frutos. Pics by Mattin and Cambra Fosca (cambrafosca.wordpress.com).

MRR: Introduce yourselves to the people reading this. What made you end up playing in Vértigo. Your punk and non-punk background.

Patricia: We are Letxon, Nagore and Patricia. Although we are from different cities, we've known each other for a long time and we've met up again living in Barcelona. We wanted to make a band together, and after a few failed attempts, Vértigo was born. We decided to keep things interesting and exchanged our instruments, so I started playing drums—even barely knowing—and Nagore started on bass. We come from crust, grindcore, hardcore and punk bands.

Nagore: I tried singing in other band projects before, that didn't get into anything or I ended up leaving. I wanted to play bass, so I got into it. I've wanted to get involved more actively in punk for a long time, after many years of going to concerts. So Letxon and I start practicing together, and then we asked Patricia and she joined us. In reference to my non-punk background, I've been part of a cultural collective working on gender and sexuality, but we're currently quite inactive and in a changing process.

MRR: What do you want to say with the band, what attitude/spirit surrounds Vértigo? Some of you come from bands with a much more aggressive sound, how did you end up doing something so melodic? Describe your music so the people reading this can get an idea.

Patricia: At least for me, Vértigo is a very familiar band, we hang out a lot and like spending time together. Our music is the extension of that, so we let ourselves explore our melodic side and fool around with bad drumming and high-pitched voices. It's true, we come from bands with a much more aggressive sound, but in fact we're still playing in bands with that kind of sound. I love both things, and I am very grateful for being able to have fun playing different styles. Vértigo is mid tempo punk with melodic vocals by the way.

Letxon: We were exactly looking for that: to do something we had never done before and that really motivated us. Although we play in bands that sound more aggressive, we like melodic bands too!

Nagore: It's funny because we wanted to play primitive and raw punk at first! Then we started to get carried along by the melodies and found it was what we really feel like doing.

MRR: What are your lyrics about? You're a bit depressed, or it just looks like that to me?

Patricia: They're thoughtful, not sad!

Nagore: We're just as depressed as anyone else! The idea was to overtake the logic of "political lyrics versus personal lyrics". We consider our lyrics to be both, personal and political. On another hand, we also wanted to point to some unpleasant feelings, conditions or aspects of our daily lives that we don't usually show or that we even try to hide. We wanted to avoid moralizing lyrics, and to try expressing some emotional states and thoughts caused by today's urban life in postindustrial Western societies!

MRR: I wouldn't like this interview to become boring, so I am going to ask you a few questions about issues that aren't directly linked to Vértigo but I'm sure you care about in one way or another. For example: I got the feeling that the punk scene in Barcelona is losing the typical reactionary and normative male predominance. Shyly other identities are making their way into punk. In your opinion, what positive things could we do to speed up these changes without falling into paternalistic, counterproductive attitudes or victimization of certain groups etc.? What's your point on this issue?

Patricia: For me it's about supporting all contribution, creating safe spaces and challenging negative attitudes and privileges that are deeply rooted inside all of us. We must learn how to recognize them and fight them. I played in an all female hardcore-crust band (Mistkäfer) for years where we experienced lots of disdain and condescension for the fact that we were women. At that time we didn't care nor realize the level of sexism in our own scene, until we talked about it and shared our experiences years later. I think it's a little different now, we're a bit more aware of harmful attitudes, as of the need to honestly support proposals that get away from traditional gender norms or that challenge heterosexism.

Nagore: Personally, I see more women getting involved and not only visible on stages, playing in bands, but also participating in other activities related to punk. More and more women are getting organized and putting up different projects (festivals, collectives, zines, bands...) in order to make of punk a safe and free space for women, dykes, queers and trans folks. In fact, there was a meeting in Madrid not long ago (organized by Core Tres, a collective that works for visibility of women in punk and hardcore and against sexism within these scenes), where we could witness that this change is not only a Barcelona thing. There are different interesting and politically committed projects going on in Valencia, Basque Country, Andalucía or Cantabria to name a few. These projects are already making changes possible, in the sense that a lot of us are meeting up and knowing each other or making connections which lead to concrete actions. However, as I said before, this change is happening in what refers to the implication of (mostly) ciswomen (which in my opinion may be due to the link between punk and autonomous feminist struggles, but that's only my view), but there is still an important lack of presence of non-normative sexual identities. Besides, this heteronormativity is mostly reproduced by men. I don't know what's going on really. In my opinion queer and transfeminism are not that close to punk around here. And honestly, I don't have an answer for this situation but I think helping to create spaces (not only physical ones) free of sexism and homo/lesbo/transphobia is somewhere to start from. Sadly enough, many queer friends still think punk is a hostile environment for them.

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MRR: I wouldn't like this interview to become boring, so I am going to ask you a few questions about issues that aren't directly linked to Vértigo but I'm sure you care about in one way or another. For example: I got the feeling that the punk scene in Barcelona is losing the typical reactionary and normative male predominance. Shyly other identities are making their way into punk. In your opinion, what positive things could we do to speed up these changes without falling into paternalistic, counterproductive attitudes or victimization of certain groups etc.? What's your point on this issue?
Patricia: For me it's about supporting all contribution, creating safe spaces and challenging negative attitudes and privileges that are deeply rooted inside all of us. We must learn how to recognize them and fight them. I played in an all female hardcore-crust band (Mistkäfer) for years where we experienced lots of disdain and condescension for the fact that we were women. At that time we didn't care nor realize the level of sexism in our own scene, until we talked about it and shared our experiences years later. I think it's a little different now, we're a bit more aware of harmful attitudes, as of the need to honestly support proposals that get away from traditional gender norms or that challenge heterosexism.
Nagore: Personally, I see more women getting involved and not only visible on stages, playing in bands, but also participating in other activities related to punk. More and more women are getting organized and putting up different projects (festivals, collectives, zines, bands...) in order to make of punk a safe and free space for women, dykes, queers and trans folks. In fact, there was a meeting in Madrid not long ago (organized by Core Tres, a collective that works for visibility of women in punk and hardcore and against sexism within these scenes), where we could witness that this change is not only a Barcelona thing. There are different interesting and politically committed projects going on in Valencia, Basque Country, Andalucía or Cantabria to name a few. These projects are already making changes possible, in the sense that a lot of us are meeting up and knowing each other or making connections which lead to concrete actions. However, as I said before, this change is happening in what refers to the implication of (mostly) ciswomen (which in my opinion may be due to the link between punk and autonomous feminist struggles, but that's only my view), but there is still an important lack of presence of non-normative sexual identities. Besides, this heteronormativity is mostly reproduced by men. I don't know what's going on really. In my opinion queer and transfeminism are not that close to punk around here. And honestly, I don't have an answer for this situation but I think helping to create spaces (not only physical ones) free of sexism and homo/lesbo/transphobia is somewhere to start from. Sadly enough, many queer friends still think punk is a hostile environment for them.

MRR: I see some tendencies in punk that I don't like. For example, I have the feeling that punk here is becoming more aesthetic—on a personal level—which means taking care of how you dress, how you represent yourself to people and so on. I see there're a bunch of people with enough money, time and standard bodies and beauty to spend time on that shit in a really meticulous way. As they all look the same and follow a pattern only for young and "beautiful" people, an exclusive and showy standard is being reinforced. And this has nothing to do with punk or my idea of a community of people who reject society's dominant values. What do you think?
Patricia: I've been in Barcelona for less than a year and I'm not sure I see all of what you say. It's true you can see, from an outsider perspective, a more aesthetic environment than in other parts of the state, but I still believe it's more complex. If punk in Barcelona is becoming exclusive, cool and empty is everyone's fault. We're giving more importance to what's accessory: how cool is your band, how full are your shows, who do you hang out with or how do you look... rather than what do you do or the shit that comes out of your mouth. We all participate in making the scene become a high school drama scene or an active and healthy space.

Nagore: Are you asking this because we're low-income, overweight and stressed out because of lack of time? Ha ha ha! We absolutely agree with you, that's why we're going to start our own resistance of fat punk tracksuits, smart anyway! Stop aesthetic standards in punk! We want body diversity! (Note from the interviewer: That's it; power to bold people with hairy ears and shit for everyone else. And I mean it.). Sure, and in this context, our bellies and your hairs are probably more revolutionary than we think! I know exactly what you mean; when I first arrived in the city it was more like the crusty moment, the more patches and dreads the better. Now it seems to be just the opposite. And there are some frivolous things that seem to give status. That has nothing to do with punk to me, it has all to do with capitalism and consumerism and the ways our identities are produced in this rotten society. So, I really mean it too, our bodies talk and say fuck off to that shit.

MRR: So, what refers to space is also a current matter in the local punk scene. In Barcelona, squatting is getting more persecuted, which has a notorious effect in the way shows are organized. Some people are putting up shows in bars, others in commercial venues... Personally, I don't think of renting spaces—where the main activity is putting up shows—as a solution. I find it much more interesting to take global solutions that still keep the political perspective involved in squatting. What's your point in all this? I know you've been part of different spaces that respond to these kind of necessities. Tell us a bit about your experience.
Patricia: In my experience sometimes it's not easy to open a space with all the characteristics you say, mostly in some cities. Zaragoza, where I'm from, is a place where squatting is still very difficult and where police presence is overwhelming. I organized gigs there for many years and was also close to Arrebato. This is a small place, rented by a group of people, which works as a social centre, horizontally, taking decisions on an assembly. However it has some limitations for its own structural characteristics: it's small, dark and with no windows. There are more comfy spaces in town for other activities than concerts. Anyway, this little "concert place" has always kept a strong political attitude and interest in other projects. Besides, it's made possible many interesting and exciting things and it's also been helpful in cases when money was needed for court fees on police repression and so on.
Letxon: By the time I was living in Valencia we decided to hire a place to run a social centre under DIY non-hierarchic ethics: La Residencia. It's a place where not only musical projects, but projects of all kind are welcome: conferences, book presentations, performing arts, film projections, workshops... But we must be honest to ourselves and admit that shows, as festive activities, tend to attract more people than other activities. Thus, the idea of "hired centres" as places for just concerts is reinforced. However, as Patri explains about her experience in Arrebato, La Residencia has been also an important support for different struggles such as animal liberation, police repression and more. It's not about turning our backs on squatting or its working ethics. It's about recognizing the different realities each one lives in her town or city. Even in a so-called cosmopolitan city like Barcelona, squatting is being really persecuted, so you think of cities like Valencia, where the shadow of fascism plans over the heads of the people who live there. In my opinion, it's positive to have both kinds of spaces: hired DIY centres and squats.

IF PUNK IN BARELONA is becoming exclusive, cool and empty is everyone's fault. We're giving more importance to what's accessory: how cool is your band, how full are your shows, who do you hang out with or how do you look... rather than what do you do or the shit that comes out of your mouth.

Nagore: Personally, I don't believe the potential of a hired social centre is only determined by its legal status (which is not always so "legal" by the way). In the same way a squat is not a guarantee of freedom or a clear political commitment. I believe things to be more complex, depending on contexts, moments, people and the kind of matters to work about... It's about the culture you help to create in your own space. For example, I've been taking part for the last years in a hired space, external to punk but connected to queer and LGBT movements, where different kind of activities took place (conferences, workshops on free software and technology, yoga, feminist self-defense, parties, film projections, independent research group meetings, critical reading groups...). We achieved a safe, creative and nice space for a while, where everything flew in a really amusing way... but that doesn't happen spontaneously, there is a lot of work behind it.

MRR: We're back to lighter questions. Tell me about projects in the Spanish State that you think may interest MRR readers and explain to us a bit about each one. It doesn't matter if you choose bands, labels, magazines, punk or non-punk spaces, whatever you want.

Nagore: Well, there are a few feminist projects I think deserve a mention! There are a few interesting feminist punk festivals in different points of the state. Furor Uteri Fest takes place in La Residencia, in Valencia. We played there a month ago in its IV edition, with Siega, Born to Hate and Pressas del Produkto. There was a presentation of different feminist projects related to punk (a documentary I will talk about later, a critical research project I did a while ago and a feminist collective that began back in the '80s), after which there was a really participative discussion about gender relations within punk and other countercultural and political spaces. It was really exciting. They have also done a great zine including articles, collages, drawings and a really cool comic! Mefssst (Musika Errebolta Feminista / Feminist Music Revolt) took place in Zarautz's gaztetxe last year, in Basque Country. Mefssst II will take place next May, just a day after the Los Crudos show there! The aim for this year is to pass from thought to action. Different workshops and jam sessions for kids will be held. The idea is that women can empower ourselves with practical knowledge distant from our gender assignations (as the technical aspect of music, for example) and also to break with the gendered access to music styles or instruments from an early age. Here in Barcelona, Femme Soroll Fest has been kicking ass about women visibility in punk for years. They do a lot of hard work to have lots of women on stage! And this year they also did a zine including interviews with the bands that played and put the gender discussion on the table. On another front, there is a film documentary about the presences and absences of women in alternative music: Tomar el Scenario (Taking the Stage), where several women related to punk, hardcore or hip-hop are interviewed. To end I'd like to mention Espai Contrabandos, a space I've just found out not long ago. It's a really welcoming place of independent and political books, located in city centre and where you can find many books on political thought. They do presentation, reading groups and more stuff... and you can also go for a tea and read any of the books they have if you feel like it.

Letxon: Bands worth mentioning: Arrest, Alerta!, the Crowd, Las Otras, Siega, Demonios Salvajes, Pena Máxima, Deserción, Hell Division, Dictadura, Insulters, Origen, Las Rodilleras, Derrota, Carmonas, Maniac and many more!

Labels I'd like to note: Trabuc Records, because it's already ten years of DIY and also Canya Records, Kremon Records, Hysterical Records, Discos Enfermos, Alta Intensidaz...Zines I love: Alta Intesidaz, Eskupe al Alkalde, Mierda and Pogo! Cool radio shows: Colores de Guerra (Radio Contrabanda, Barcelona, xcoloresdeguerrax.wordpress.com), Ciutat Podrida (Radio Topo, Zaragoza, ciutatpodrida.blogspot.com.es), La Casa de la Bomba (Radio Ela, Madrid, lacasadelabomba.wordpress.com), Cuanto más Rapido y Guarro Mejor (Radio Chabolo, Zaragoza, rapidoyguarro.blogspot.com.es), Rebeldes sin Sombra (Radio Bronka, Barcelona, rebeldessinsombraradio.blogspot.com.es).

Patricia: Well, I'd say Diswar from Bilbao, which is one of the best D-beat bands I've ever seen. Radionova and Pol Pot from Zaragoza, new wave punk with keyboards and smart and danceable post punk. Antiguo Régimen from Valencia: dark and slight post punk or whatever-wave. Also from Valencia, Derrota. I can't stop listening to their new record Guerra Civil... I think it really reflects, both in form and content, how one feels here in these moments. The cover, the lyrics... I think it's really amazing. From Barcelona I really like Una Bèstia Incontrolable, where Letxon also plays. All these bands have a bandcamp, in case you'd like to check them out! And about zines, Dispara! was born a few months ago. It's a punk photo zine in Spanish, but it's images basically: archive pics, reports... really interesting.

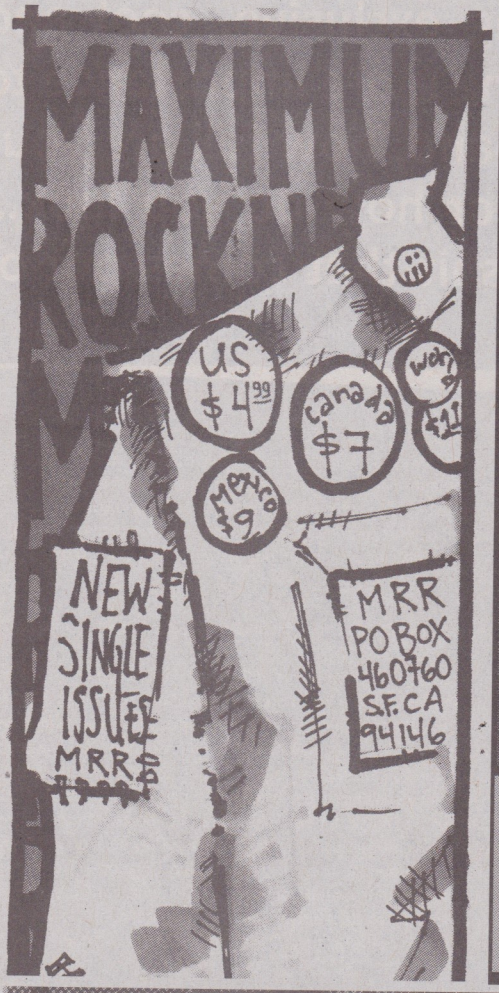
MRR: We're about to finish here. Tell me about your demo tape, if you're happy with the result or not, if it's moving OK, how was the process and all that. Which plans do you have for the future and what can we expect from Vértigo.

Letxon: The demo tape was recorded by Denis Duarte at the Janowski Studios in a really rainy day last November. We decided to self-release and the K7 was out in January. As beginners with our instruments, we were a bit insecure, but I'm glad to say now that everything went perfectly and that I'm quite happy with the final result. At this time, we're slowly moving it, because we haven't played that much. We're doing a ten-date tour through the state next April and we expect to move the demo a lot more! Besides that, and looking to the future, we keep composing songs and when we think it's the time, we'll record something to be released in vinyl.

Nagore: Letxon, you're flipping out! You're not a beginner! Ha ha! Well, I'm really happy too about the recording. It's been my first and it was a really good experience. We got on with Denis really easily and brought nice seitan sandwiches ha ha, so everything was really friendly and laid back. The process was quite fast and we love the result. And as far as the future goes, who knows what to expect from Vértigo! We could change our instruments again and start playing grindcore.

Vértigo: Thanks a lot for thinking of us and

long live punk!



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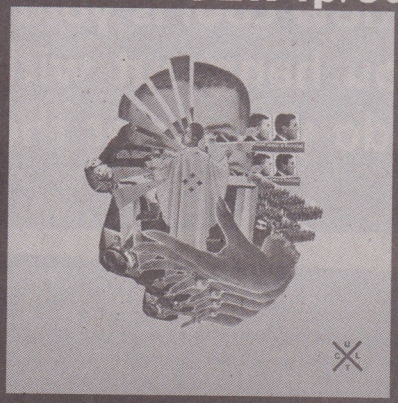

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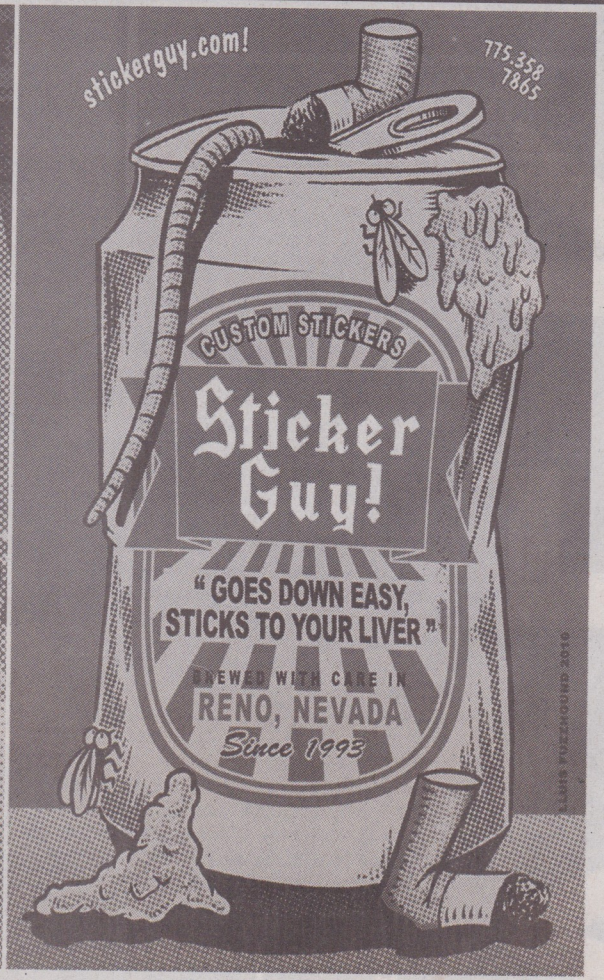

SVIN [A LENINGRAD PUNK PROGENITOR]

Interviews conducted by Alexander Herbert unless otherwise stated.
Translations of other Russian-language interviews are the authors' own.
All band transliterations follow the Library of Congress style.
Names and interviewees determined their own spelling.
Written by Tommy Dean and Alexander Herbert.

The futility and discontent that served as the impetus for punk rock's advent in the West were simmering in a faction of Leningrad's youth. The Soviet Union was amid its Era of Stagnation as it lurched toward the final decade of the Cold War under the rule of General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev. Nearly half a century had elapsed since the Bolshevik Revolution, and the promise of enlightened tomorrow had long given way to a stale utopia and petty competition with the West. Creativity was property of the state and artistic dissent spelled persecution. All that was needed for a punk scene to be born was the right person to discover the right music, and when an unruly, charismatic kid from Leningrad named Andrei Panov, better known as Svin (swine or pig), unearthed the Sex Pistols and their *Never Mind the Bollocks* LP, a movement was born.

Shunned by the public and hampered by state censorship, Svin and his band Avtomaticheskie Udovletvoriteli (AU or the Automatic Satisfiers) were relegated to the underground. Punk rock was a threatening enigma for the average Soviet citizen, but among the early Leningrad crew it was a means of existing within a conformist culture without fully surrendering to it. Armed with an unyielding attitude, and operating with a barebones DIY aesthetic, the Satisfiers outlived Brezhnev's regime. Eventually, as the iron grip behind the Iron Curtain slackened, Leningrad's punk pioneers were able to bring their outlandish antics to the public, and Svin was hailed as the "Grandfather of Russian Punk."

"He was perhaps the first musician in Russia who had the real 'punk attitude,'" says Vladimir Kozolov, author of *Punk Rock in a Non-Western Society* and director of the forthcoming Siberian punk documentary *Traces in the Snow*. "His 'fuck you' [stance] towards Soviet society was remarkable." The Satisfiers' musicality and professionalism will always be questionable, but Svin's legacy as a progenitor of a scene that didn't exist

and the embodiment of an untamed sensibility that was extraordinarily rare is undeniable. "Svin in a way inspired the subsequent generation of Russian punk musicians, proving to them that it was still possible to play punk rock in the Soviet Union," notes Kozolov.

Born in 1960, Svin's first experience with art and music was a far cry from the raucous rock'n'roll he established in Russia. His parents, Valery and Liya Panov, were renowned ballet dancers and Svin grew up in theaters surrounded by "naked sweaty women" during his mother's performances and rehearsals.

The Panovs were wealthy, compared to many Leningrad residents and furnished their apartment with the best of everything. The future frontman's initiation into prominent Soviet society did little to interest him in upward mobility, though. Liya recalls trying to dress her son in fashionable outfits when he was a child, but even then he refused to conform. "Svin constantly gave these expensive clothes away," she says in an interview with Russian culture book series *The Stogoff Project*.

> CREATIVITY WAS PROPERTY OF THE STATE AND ARTISTIC DISSENT SPELLED PERSECUTION

Svin's aversion to the status quo may have been influenced by the distaste for authority he acquired early in life. When Svin was around twelve years old, his father immigrated to Israel—a country allied with the United States—and the Panovs were shunned by their neighbors for being disloyal Soviet citizens. In school, Svin was called to the front of the classroom and the teacher denounced his father as a traitor. From then on, Svin detested academia, frequently running away from the classroom. He dropped out of college during his adolescence, and then at nineteen he quit Leningrad's prestigious Theater Institute that his mother had used her connections to get him enrolled in.

What passion Svin lacked in the classroom he made up for with his affinity for contemporary Western music. During his teenage years, he bought a guitar, an amplifier and drums with money his father had given him (which was supposed to be used for school), and he was known amongst his peers for his large record collection—about 20 records in total (Western albums had to be approved and rereleased by the State's Melodiya Records, making them difficult and expensive to acquire). According to Alexey Rybin, an early guitarist for the Satisfiers, Svin's collection included Chicago, Kansas, Genesis and Creedence Clearwater Revival. Yet, it was the Sex Pistols and their 1977 *Never Mind the Bollocks* LP that would have the most profound effect on the burgeoning youth.

There are conflicting reports as to how Svin discovered the Sex Pistols. One source notes that he read about the English band in a Leningrad newspaper, which labeled them as "bourgeois fashion." Another account recalls the front man purchasing the seminal *Never Mind the Bollocks* LP at an audiophile flea market for 30 rubles. Other people claim it was a friend of Svin's named Evegni Yufit who heard the Pistols on BBC radio, and called his mate and proclaimed, "Svin, these guys are idiots just like us!"

Nevertheless, Svin was enticed with the Western trend and, in 1979, he started his own band of rock'n'roll anti-heroism with his friends, many of whom were fellow drinkers and dropouts. Svin chose the name Avtomaticheskie Udovletvoriteli—the Automatic Satisfiers—because it was a close approximation to the Sex Pistols' name. He also adopted the Pistols' persona of snotty nihilism and proudly brought the band's stripped down aesthetic to a new low. "I figured that there's no one who's worse than me," said Svin in an interview with *Roxy* magazine in the '90s. "If so, everything is going to be alright, because bad is the best."

"Andrei used to say, 'Everybody wants to be at the top, they form bands to become popular,'" recalls Svin's late wife Olga Korol-Borodyuk. "'But I'll form a band that will be the worst.'"

Due to the scant opportunities for public performance or documentation during the band's early incarnations, AU existed more as an idea in the minds of its ephemeral lineup than as a cohesive performing unit. High-fidelity recording equipment was unavailable and all the venues, which were owned and operated by the government, banned punk rock. "There was no chance that a punk band could play live on stage," says Feder Lavrov, musician for the early Leningrad punk acts Otdel Samoiskoreneniia (Department of Self-Eradication or OS), and Narodnoe Opolchenie (People's Militia or NO). "There was no place to even practice, because the 'culture' and 'youth' clubs that would allow non-professional musicians [to rehearse], were under State control."

Leningrad punk bands played in the un-comfort of their apartments, hosting DIY shows called "kvartirnikii" with a guest list that included everyone who could fit in their living room. Lavrov also set up a home recording studio called Begemotion Records in 1982, which doubled as a playing space for OS, as well as NO and Brigadni Podryad. Svin and other local musicians played on tracks that were recorded at Begemotion, but the Satisfiers didn't officially release anything from the studio. Lavrov concedes that this was due in part to the rivalry among the players in the tight-knit scene. "We were rather jealous guys to one another," he recalls, "And the more I felt antipathy, the less I wished to record his album even though he really wanted me to." The tension between the two probably was not helped by the fact that Svin was supposedly in love with the girl who would become Lavrov's wife.

Russian rock journalist Artemy Troitsky was able to hear an AU demo that was recorded in someone's apartment when he met Svin in the early '80s. Troitsky recalls Svin being dressed like a "Russian winterized version" of a Sex Pistols poster, wearing an obnoxious tie and grimy coat riddled with safety pins. "He said he was a punk," writes Troitsky in his book *Back in the USSR*, "...and produced for our inspection a reel of tape wrapped in cellophane." Svin seemed to have succeeded at being the worst—the seasoned rock critic described the Satisfiers' demo as "juvenile nonsense" and "ravingly absurd," with a "heavy fuzzbox guitar sound, plus a vocal fighting its way through an over-abundance of saliva in the oral cavity." The 1979 demo has since become an object of myth to admirers of AU, as the tape has all but disappeared from record.

Nevertheless, Troitsky set up a few small shows for AU in Moscow in early 1981. The band then made their Leningrad public debut at a café called Trum on March 20, 1981 for friend Mikhail "Maik" Naumenko's birthday party. According to Troitsky's account, Svin and the Satisfiers played like a Sex Pistols knockoff band, emphasizing chaotic snotty-ness and diminishing any trace of musical merit, or originality. "Their sluggish anarchy on stage made an incongruous combination with the aggressiveness they showed toward the audience by spitting from all sides and smashing any and all tableware at hand," writes Troitsky. "[Svin] was an able and improvising

showman (from the School of Utter Repulsiveness)."

The restaurant cut the set short and banned the Satisfiers before Naumenko had even arrived. To make it up to Naumenko, the next night, members of the Satisfiers including Svin, Victor Tsoi, Rybin, along with other underground Leningrad musicians, took turns playing songs at the restaurant of the local hotel, The Brig. This would be remembered as the band's first full public performance in their hometown.

Even if AU was permitted to legally perform (assuming they polished their sound and curbed their destructive tendencies), they probably would not have resonated with Leningrad listeners. American and European rock music was trending in the Soviet Union in the '80s, but punk was not palatable to the public. "In that period the whole county was listening to hard rock, like Deep Purple," recalls Evgeny Titov, bassist for NO and later AU. "No one understood the primitive sounds of punk."

Many people in the West perceived punk as a crucial counter point to overblown rock stardom endemic on American airwaves, but Soviet citizens could not appreciate the sub-genre's brash tactics in the context of a larger pop paradigm. Russia's musical heritage was imbued with poeticism, virtuosity, and beauteous melodies—characteristics that the Satisfiers proudly discarded.

Punks were also pariahs among musicians. For decades, rock artists in Russia vied for mainstream and government approval, attempting to shrug the image of delinquency foisted upon them by government Culture Houses; and they were finally making headway by the turn of the decade, as evidenced by the creation of the State-approved Leningrad Rock Club in 1981. Musicians viewed punk rock as antithetical to their quest of acceptance. "Whereas Johnny Rotten might take it as a sign of his street credibility to have grown-ups call him a hooligan," writes Troitsky, "our rockers had been branded that way for ages for no reason, and wanted only to rid themselves of such appellations."

Public approval and social acceptance was never the point of playing music for Svin and his Leningrad comrades—punk was their means of escape. The State was indomitable and omnipresent; being one of its cogs was, for some, a dreary day-to-day existence. Particularly in the years before Gorbachev's presidency in the late '80s, Soviet society was inculcated into complacency, adopting the mantra of eat, sleep, work, repeat. This did not sit well with the Leningrad youths. "We were young, and the habit of mindless work didn't exist in us," says Rybin in a *Stogoff Project* interview. Music was their private rebellion: "We heard rock'n'roll earlier than others and loved it more than others. Why it happened and why it affected us differently, I do not know. Maybe it's some kind of pathology."

The Automatic Satisfier's reflected a disdain for the society in which they were born into. Their songs tended to answer the call of complacency with straightforward sneering nihilism or smut, and many of their songs, such as "Delirium," detailed the mundaneness of everyday life and the toll it takes on a restless psyche: "Going crazy all day/The reason is one that I do not share/I do not know what to do/Delirium/Delirium." The lyrics were simple and at times cartoonish, often taking on perverted themes like spitting and masturbation. But the pessimism was

PERHAPS IT WAS THEIR POSITION OF PRIVILEGE THAT ALLOWED THE EARLY RUSSIAN PUNKS TO SEE WHAT WAS BEYOND THE SOVIET SYSTEM, WHICH LED THEM TO REJECT A NEUTERED LIFESTYLE THEY WERE BRED TO EMBRACE

palpable, and in the context of typical Russian music, with its penchant for technical virtuosity and floridity, the Satisfiers were barbaric.

Svin was not just a mouthpiece for these lyrics—he lived them. "He was the first among the older generation to accept the rules of self-destruction and follow them literally," says Lavrov. Svin developed a reputation for being an alcohol-fueled miscreant, and innumerable stories of his outlandish antics, from public nudity to making tea with toilet water, to live on, while the line between truth and myth is blurry. Yufit—the man responsible for introducing Svin to the Sex Pistols—recalls how he and Svin used to shovel snow naked to shock passersby, and would sprint in separate directions when the police arrived. Svin also supposedly defecated on the doorstep of Boris Grebenshchikov, the front man of the Leningrad band Akvarium (Aquarium). When the police were called, Svin picked up his feces and walked away—the cops didn't want to apprehend a man holding his own shit.

The rank smell of his reputation preceded Svin "the pig," yet the public image he cultivated is only one side of the multi-dimensional front man. When Svin's friends and family recall him, they seem to speak of an intelligent and benevolent person—an angelic Doctor Jekyll behind closed doors and a delinquent Mr. Hyde on the street. "[He was] an intelligent guy from an intelligent ballet family, but at the same time, equally talented and shocking," said Evgenii Federov, from the band Ob'ekt Nasmeshek (Object of Ridicule, or OH), in the documentary *Svin 50*.

Svin cared for his mother and shared his music projects with her (to this day she owns the rights to AU). He also endeared himself to the elderly, beguiled many women and earned the admiration of his friends. "With his human qualities, talent and charm, he brought a certain aura or atmosphere that people needed in life badly," recalls Korol-Borodyuk in an interview with the *St. Petersburg Times*. "He's the only one who was like that."

"I can talk much about him," says Titov, reminiscing. But instead, he succinctly notes that, "He was an honest man and never a rat."

Ironically, members of the Leningrad punk scene had the most to gain by participating in the system. Most of them were part of a redefined intelligentsia class, and were considered the "golden youth"—children who came from relative prominence—and their parents ranged from high-ranking army officials to state-funded artists. Perhaps it was their position of privilege that allowed the early Russian punks to see what was beyond the Soviet system, which led them to reject a neutered lifestyle they were bred to embrace.

Like the New York scene in the late '70s, the early Leningrad crew was an artistic enclave of sorts, comprised of a diverse cast of characters. Besides musicians and aspiring filmmakers, among the Satisfiers' retinue were nurses, mortuary workers, psychiatric ward staffers, political radicals and art school slackers. "It was more of a subculture togetherness," says Titov. "It was a fairly large company of people who liked spending time together." They hung out in Leningrad's city center, causing mischief, drinking and beating up one another, always baiting the public. Because of their limited exposure to the West, they defined punk in their own terms, forging an alternative lifestyle particular to them.

Svin's flat was also a popular hangout, as well as the "Kamchatka" boiler room, which became a practice space for Tsoi and Rybin's new band, Kino, and is now a museum and night club. "It was quite a big place where we could get together and play music," says Sergei Firsov, Kamchatka's manager, in *Svin 50*. "We didn't disturb, and it was open 24/7. There were 15 to 20 people there. Work jogged on, but getting together was our main occupation."

Despite his rebellious streak, Svin stayed away from political themes, seemingly content to outrage the culture that surrounded him rather than point the finger at the system that spawned it. "I'm not a revolutionary who's throwing bombs at the Tsar," he said in an interview with *Fuzz* in 1996. The front man asserted that for him politics had no place in music. People didn't come to shows to be lectured—they came to have a good time. "You don't talk about politics and freedom, you just do what you like—what you want to do," says Titov. "It's a state of inner freedom."

Svin's cohort Lavrov was one of the few punks in the early Leningrad scene who bore witness to the repercussions of outright political dissidence in music. With songs like Voennaia Monarkhiia (Military Monarchy), he lambasted political leaders on both sides of the Cold War. During the OS recording process, members of other Leningrad punk bands lent their talent, but wisely took none of the credit. "Svin and members of NO would play bass or drums or piano with OS," said Lavrov in a recent interview with Polish magazine *Moodbrd*. "Nobody would want to be signed under the lyrics I wrote. There was too much anarchy in the lyrics for 1982 or 1983."

At 20 years old, Lavrov was forced to stay in a mental hospital for refusing to join the Red Army. He was discharged two weeks later with a note on his permanent record that said he was "schizoid." Upon returning home from the hospital, Lavrov was summoned to KGB headquarters and interrogated about his band's activity. Some of his supposed friends had turned his tapes in to the authorities. "They were talking with me for hours, they showed me loads of photographs and copies of lyrics and tapes of my band provided to them by the people I used to call my friends," he says. Lavrov was forced to sign a contract stipulating he would never challenge the Soviet Union again and would destroy all his records. Of course, he disobeyed the authorities and he currently plans to rerelease a re-mastered version of the OS recordings he saved.

In 1986, the punk band ON, led by Aleksandr "Rikoshet" Aksenov, played the Leningrad Rock Club during an annual festival, signifying a newfound leniency in the once-prohibitive State institution. Svin wanted to follow suit and transition from public pariah to legitimate musician—a contradictory desire for a person who staked his reputation on the rejection of the establishment. "For such a great man and great artist with a naturally uncompromising attitude like Svin's, it

was wrong to be in the Leningrad Rock Club," says Troitsky in *Svin 50*, "but he wanted to join them." Perhaps he felt that all his years creating and writing music would be in vain if he could not share his work in public, but also, Svin was born an attention seeker, and it's only natural that he would want to be on a stage, his true domain. He eventually got his wish, and after the government lifted its ban on AU in 1987, they were admitted into the Club.

During the early '80s, the Soviet government led by Brezhnev's successor, Yurii Andropov, had tightened its white-knuckled grip on the throat of youthful expression. State pedaled propaganda warned the masses of the proliferation of "Western Capitalist Culture" among juveniles, and rock music was pushed further to the fringes of legitimacy. But for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction, and when Mikhail Gorbachev took office and later initiated Glasnost (Openness) in the late 1980s, he effectively slackened the ironclad grip of the State and gave rock'n'roll to its rightful owners—the people. This was especially good news for AU, who were once outlawed.

AU played a litany of gigs in Leningrad as well as concerts and festivals throughout Russia during the late '80s. For the first time, the band was regularly documented with live audio and video recordings and they were also featured on compilations. AU had a simple sound—a mid-tempo rhythm section with Svin plodding through lyrics with a vocal style that had equal elements of singing, snarling, gargling and whispering. Svin had a swagger and bravado reminiscent of his early influences, Sid Vicious and Iggy Pop, which he seemed to apathetically channel while performing. The band stuck to their age-old themes of smut and self-deprecation, but also touched on political and class issues in songs like "Bourgeoise," as well as "Reagan Provocateur," the latter of which would be the title track of the Satisfiers' first live album.

It was a heady time to be in a Russian rock band with such unprecedented freedom. Even though playing with AU wasn't lucrative, it was always a worthy venture. "Often we did not get paid anything, but we were glad that we had the opportunity to speak at all," says Titov. "We were naïve romantics, with all the threatening appearance."

"The [tours] were always happy," says Valery Morozov who drummed for AU from 1987 to 1989. "We were all young and free. Svin was talented, and talented people are always interesting."

Svin may have yearned to play in public, but he didn't tame himself to win them over. He sustained his drunken mischievous tendencies, and AU shows often included displays of public nudity with the front man pretending to accidentally drop his pants or nonchalantly wearing a pair of assless trousers. When AU played the 5th Leningrad Rock Club Festival in 1987,

their set was cut short after members of the audience yelled profanities into the microphone that Svin handed to them. The crowd refused to leave, and a fight erupted. Svin was invited back the next year for the 6th Rock Club Festival—a testament to his newfound popularity and the relaxation of cultural restrictions in Russia. He played a second set with his offshoot project, 600, which bore a resemblance to the Satisfiers.

The front man had amassed somewhat of a cult following during the Satisfiers' last decade, both for his shenanigans and his legacy of being Russia's punk Prometheus. During one night on the road in 1988, according to Titov, some punks from Moscow wanted to meet Svin and broke into his hotel suite. They showed admiration for their forbear by imitating him, and trashed his room. Svin craved attention, but rejected the grandeur that came with his legacy. When *Fuzz* magazine asked him in 1996 what he thought about being dubbed the "Grandfather of Russian Punk," he replied "Whatever! Why should I care?" He maintained that he didn't see himself as a punk anymore, but a drunkard who enjoyed playing music. He diverged from the parameters of the genre he defined, and experimented with different music styles. During the '90s, he kept up appearances with AU at festivals and concerts, but also formed Arkestr AU, which fused elements of disco and ska into their repertoire.

The quintessential rock'n'roll lifestyle of boozing and bodily neglect Svin championed for more than 20 years would not go without consequence. "Pig never cared about his health," says Yufit, recalling how Svin drank both as a means of sustenance and as an anesthetic for chronic gastrointestinal issues. "He had problems with his stomach, and he used alcohol to relieve the pain, but at some point it was no longer helping." In 1998, Svin was rushed to the hospital for abdomen pain that turned out to be appendicitis. The seemingly simple operation took a deadly turn when Svin developed peritonitis—an infection of the inner abdomen wall. He spent the next day in the hospital's intensive care unit on life support, where he died at age 38.

The loss of Svin was felt by many: the blossoming world of Russian rock had lost a maverick, and those who were close to him would forever be without their charmed friend, son, father and husband. Some could not believe that the legendary front man was felled by something so unceremonious. "When the star of punk rock died from appendicitis, it is stupid and complete garbage," says Titov. Others knew that living fast meant not growing old. "When the forecast calls for a thunderstorm and you wait and wait...eventually it comes full force," Morozv metaphorically ruminates. And for Svin himself, his demise may have been a self-fulfilling prophecy. "I remember him saying, like the late singer Janis Joplin," recalls Yufit. "'Have fun to the fullest. You will have the chance to become a beautiful corpse.'"

Svin is seemingly immortal. He lives on, vicariously and in the remembrance of others. "Our daughter is a copy of Andrei," says Olga Korol-Borodyuk to the *SP Times*. "She will listen to every argument, but do everything her own way, because she is confident." Titov still plays Svin's songs with his new band Atstskie Uskoriteli (Hellish Accelerators), and every year, the singer's wife and friends put on memorial events in his honor. Old musicians and new bands play, while people drink and reminisce.

Several of Svin's friends and members of the early Leningrad scene went on to have prominent careers. Victor Tsoi and Rybin achieved national rock stardom in Kino in the late '80s (the boyishly good looking Tsoi, who developed a massive cult following, died in an automobile accident at the pinnacle of his celebrity in 1990), Yufit became a successful independent director and pioneered the Necrorealism film genre and Lavrov maintains respectable presence in the Russian art world and currently runs a gallery space. Svin was not the only casualty though—some of the Satisfiers members overdosed on drugs, went to jail or disappeared into obscurity

Svin has been written into the pages of Russian rock history as a punk pioneer who was part intellectual and part hooligan. The punk scene he distanced himself from long ago is thriving in the same city that is now called St. Petersburg. If nothing else, Svin serves as an example to the next generation of kids: underground music can live on in adverse conditions. If the government outlaws you and society is disgusted by you, but you and your friends are having fun, that probably means you're doing it right.wew

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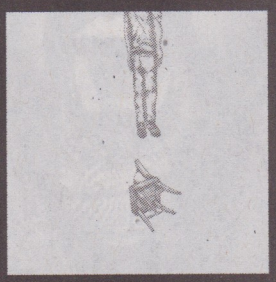

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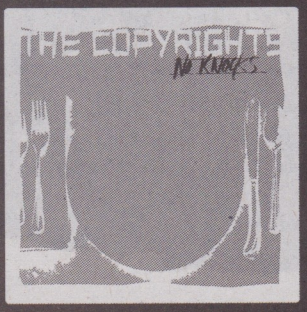

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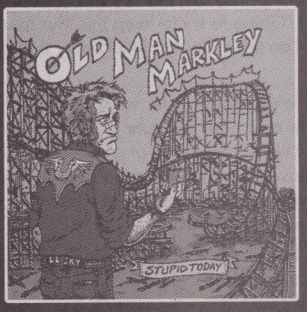

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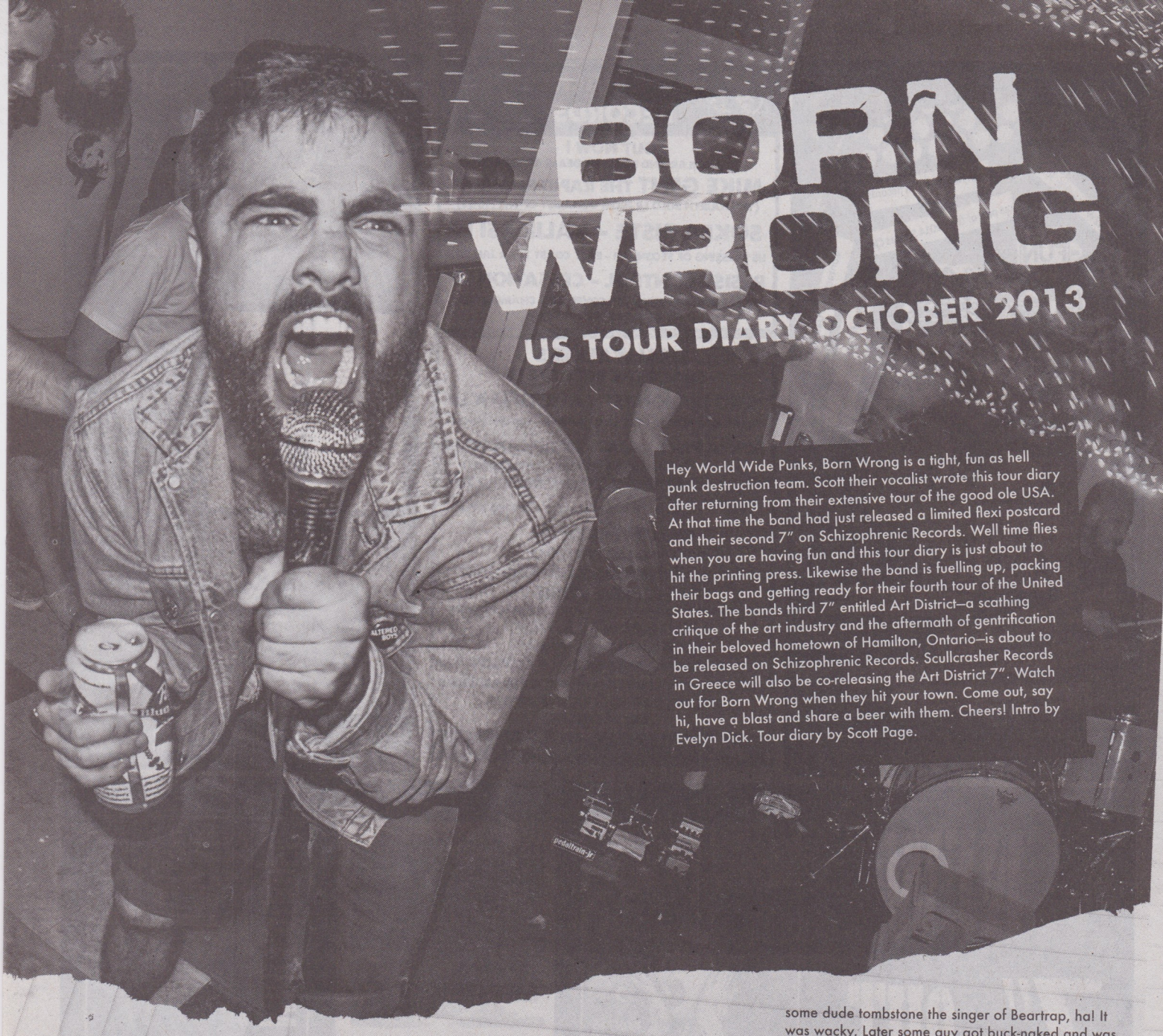


BORN WRONG

US TOUR DIARY OCTOBER 2013

Hey World Wide Punks, Born Wrong is a tight, fun as hell punk destruction team. Scott their vocalist wrote this tour diary after returning from their extensive tour of the good ole USA. At that time the band had just released a limited flexi postcard and their second 7" on Schizophrenic Records. Well time flies when you are having fun and this tour diary is just about to hit the printing press. Likewise the band is fuelling up, packing their bags and getting ready for their fourth tour of the United States. The bands third 7" entitled Art District—a scathing critique of the art industry and the aftermath of gentrification in their beloved hometown of Hamilton, Ontario—is about to be released on Schizophrenic Records. Scullcrasher Records in Greece will also be co-releasing the Art District 7". Watch out for Born Wrong when they hit your town. Come out, say hi, have a blast and share a beer with them. Cheers! Intro by Evelyn Dick. Tour diary by Scott Page.

OCTOBER 2: We've got the van loaded and everyone's here. CJ and I are both pretty sick which fucking blows. Almost at the border and I have to take a shit. Probably just nerves, the border is scary as fuck. This is our third US tour and it never gets any less nerve wracking—they can do basically whatever they fucking want. Going to try to keep this tour journal going daily on this shitty old Blackberry that keeps turning off.

Well, that was the smoothest border crossing we've ever had. En route to Syracuse where our first show went from being at a venue with four bands to us playing our friend Aaron's place. I wish Ben from Buffalo was coming down too but we'll see him our last night here. Back in 'merica!

I've filled up half of a small size Tim Horton's coffee cup with hork phlegm. Stuffy van is going to fuck my shit up.

Just spent all afternoon dicking around in Buffalo and stopped in Rochester on our way to Syracuse, only for us to realize the show was an early show. The GPS says we'll be there at 9pm and the show was supposed to end at 8pm...so now I'm just hoping we get to play. Doesn't look good, we'll see.

Yep just got a message that we can't play this late I'm fucking so pissed off at myself.

OCTOBER 3: Aside from the 99-cent king cans of Labatt Ice, yesterday fucking sucked. Today's looking even better as I sharted, ruining my favorite pair of boxers. Getting ready to start driving to Boston.

About an hour out of Boston. Just drove a little over two hours... First time I drove the van on tour in the States. Usually CJ and Brandon take care of that. Can't wait to finally fucking play.

We've arrived in Boston, the bar is really big... crazy big with a pretty funny "catwalk" style stage ha ha. We're all starving. Still can't wait to play. Parking in Boston is impossible.

In the van driving to Matt from Ancient Filth's place. Just finished playing a really well put together show. Ramrod/Machine was the Boston venue, it's an awesome LGBT bar/club/karaoke place that had just started doing punk shows. Fucking great. Really good turn out for a Thursday and an incredible first show, especially after missing the first night. Boom Boom Kid was so rad. Great vibe during his set and I watched some dude tombstone the singer of Beartrap, ha! It was wacky. Later some guy got buck-naked and was running around. Looking forward to BBK tomorrow and in Philly. Good time. Real tired. Jersey tomorrow.

Definitely going to send Matt a Christmas card, that guy rules. Driving around Boston looking for the record shop.

OCTOBER 4: Got a couple records to Armageddon Records in Boston...the dude from Boston Strangler was working there which was cool. Found out as I asked, like a little kid, if they had any of the BS tapes in the shop. I'm sure I looked like a knob. Nothing new, fuck it. Punk points are in the minus anyway. Back in the van driving to Jersey.

Felt good to play and we jammed a new tune but played to like five people maybe? And there were like 20 to 30 in the garage so... Jersey kinda bombed which was unexpected—the past two times there have been incredible before so whatever. It was so good seeing Dan Gonzales, the raddest dude in Jersey hands down. Fuck anyone who says differently. I'm going to have a good time regardless. 3 Jane rules.

OCTOBER 5: Super hungover driving back up to Brooklyn. Last night was a party.

We're at some "god of guitar stores" guitar store in Brooklyn—Retro Fret? Boring me to death. I get that all the stuff is super old and expensive but I truly couldn't give a fuck less. Probably because I can't play worth a shit so it's like any Guitar Center or Long and McQuade... And I know I'm going to see ten million guitar stores before I'm home. The only good part is that John always plays Black Baron songs in the shops—I love it. Hungover and sweaty. Gotta find an arcade.

Just saw Michael Cera in Brooklyn. He's a pencil neck in real life as well.

So we played the Acheron...and people seemed really into it. Walked into the bar about half way through and saw Kirk from across the room. We played with his band Neo Cons in Montreal on our first tour. He seemed really stoked on our set, which means a lot. Fucking Heathen ruled, and so did our boys in Absolut and Silent Order who came down from Canada as well. Too much fun.

We got drunk as hell with Marc 'The Narc' Grillo as well as all Absolut and Silent Order guys. Apparently Joel and I were blackout, being complete psychos? No surprises there.

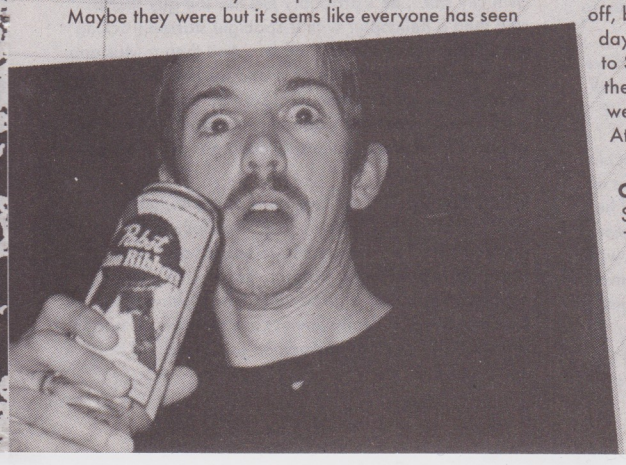
Cool record store in Brooklyn—Heaven Street nice guys there. Eating then heading to Philly.

OCTOBER 7: Sitting on our new friend Courtney's porch in West Philly. I slept on a removed van seat on the porch and feel like a million dollars. Everyone here is so fucking rad. This guy Ryan looks exactly like our friend Doug from back home. We raged with Philly's nicest motherfucker, Jim from Badside and his bandmate Will. Great seeing him again and hung out with some awesome people like Jake(s). Dan from Lotus Fucker came down as it was Boom Boom Kid's last date in 'merica with us... I love that guy along with all the BBK dudes, Jeff from Lotus Fucker has been driving them around on their tour. I beatboxed while some Philly kids freestyled outside the venue, which was awesome. Golden Tea House is such a sick venue and the band Bad American fucking rules. Jim better bring that fucking Bad Side 7" for me to buy tomorrow.

OCTOBER 8: I shouldn't be awake right now. I somehow had drinks again last night. It was awesome seeing Jim last night and getting to hang again with both Jakes. Met some people who had come up to Philly from Orlando too, so that's cool. Finally have the Badside 7" and Jake showed us his sick VHS zine.... Has recorded live songs by tons of bands, so pumped to bring it home. I'd move to Philly... maybe I will at some point.

On the way to DC; show looks like it will be a good one. We'll see. In DC, this seems like a sick small venue.

The set was tight as hell. Lots of people came out, it was really well organized. CJ broke a string but we kind of recovered from it with some in-between bullshit. I can't really tell if people were into it? Maybe they were but it seems like everyone has seen everything before so whatever. I had fun playing and Chris seems like a real genuine guy, he put together a packed show, pretty rad. His other band Disciples of Christ was awesome and this dude Robin is chill as well.



The slow transition from having a great fun tour to me being the band outsider has begun for sure. I'm just going to stop talking and eventually probably stop drinking. Just book the tour, write riffs, organize merch, and shut the fuck up...then everything will be fine. We got an email about a Euro tour today too. As stoked as I was... no way it's going to happen. I'll be surprised if these guys talk to me after Buffalo.

They have N64 with NWO vs WCW Revenge as well as Tony Hawk. Everyone at this house is really cool, lots of solid video games.

OCTOBER 9: Dan couldn't get the Baltimore show together which sucks but it happens and it looks like someone is going to put a show together in North Carolina somewhere so it looks like Saturday won't be a bust. Stoked to see Marc 'The Narc' Grillo, Dan Gonzales and their crews. Richmond should be fun as hell. So many seafood places down here, it's sick.

OCTOBER 10: So drunk in Richmond. Luckily we jumped on a show with our buddies from Silent Order, ended up being great. I just found out DJ, whose house we're playing, is in the band Slugz, which is incredible. I'm taking a nasty spray crap in the bathroom with no lock. Everyone is telling us to come out to another show and rage.

OCTOBER 11: Didn't end up going to the other gig after the house show we played... but I think we might check out the bar/arcade, as well as the record store in town, a bit later. Richmond has been awesome so far, especially considering we got a show on our day off after Baltimore dropped.

The rest of the band is obsessed with Kroger. I don't get it, ha ha.

OCTOBER 12: It still hasn't stopped raining in Richmond, my feet have been soaked since we left DC and it's making me fucking crazy. Geoff, whose band Altered Boys we played with in May, offered us a place to stay but the guys went on an adventure to absolutely nowhere, resulting in us all sleeping in the van. Now I'm walking around a shithole part of Richmond just hoping for a coffee and a place to piss. It was incredible seeing Dan Gonzales' band Razorheads who fucking blew me away as well as watching Marc 'The Narc' Grillo rip drums for Pleasure Industry. It might have actually been worth arriving in this personal hell. Great show and turn out. I just want to be fucking dry. Finally found a fucking coin laundry... Turning point, I hope.

The son of a bitch in North Carolina dropped our show so now we have a Saturday off. Huge piss off, but what can you do. Now we're driving all day to just outside Atlanta. I think we're close to South Carolina now... Just saw chickens at the side of the road, it's getting weirder and weirder. I wish we were playing, god damn it. At least we're in the weird south now.

OCTOBER 13: Sitting in a waffle house in Spartanburg, South Carolina. Playing today. This place is so boring and I've never seen so many churches. Playing with Cheap Art from Atlanta who we played a couple shows with in May. The dude says it's a "cookout" as well so I'm guessing that means barbecuing some food, which would be incredible, I'm

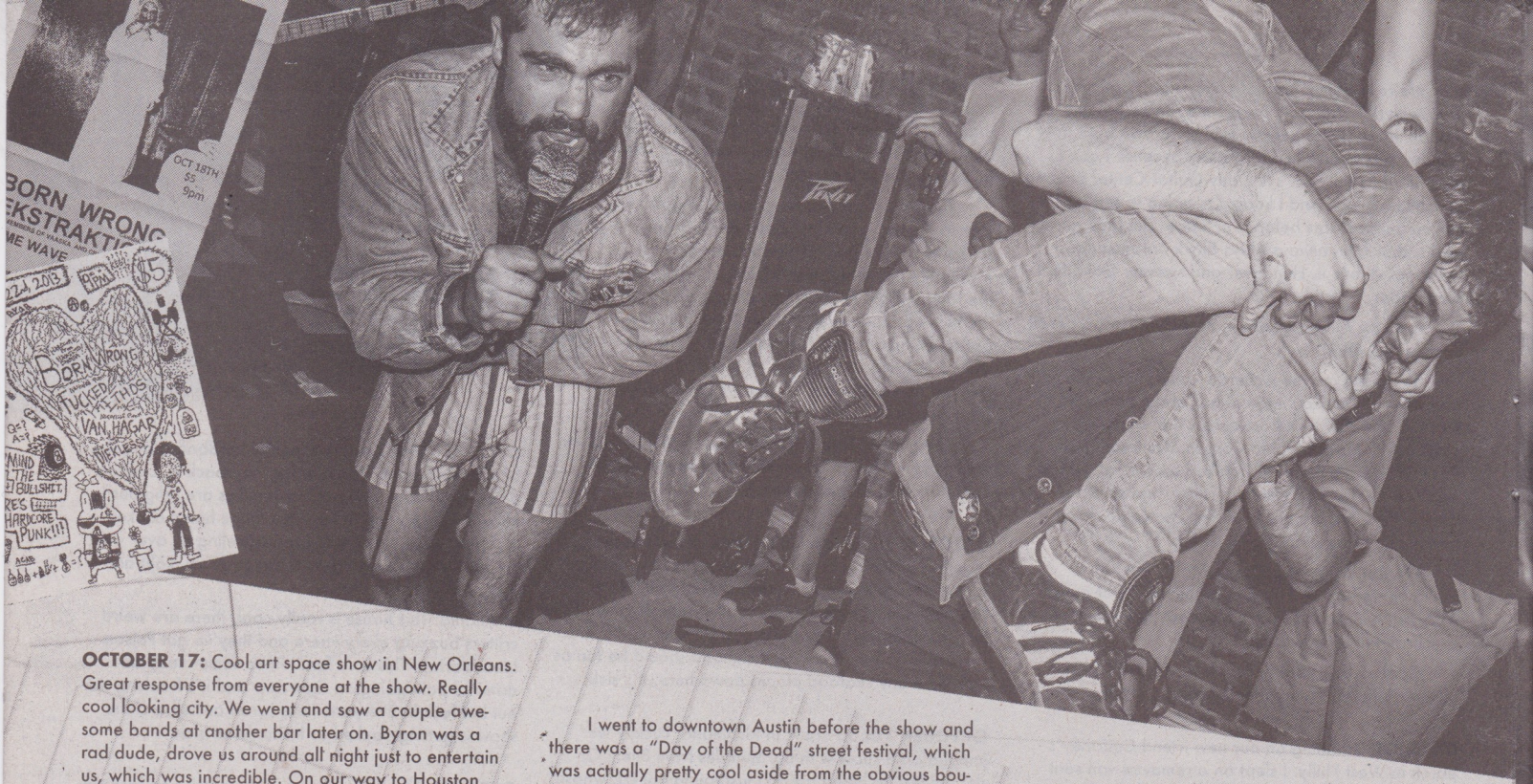
so sick of eating shitty continental cardboard bagels and in restaurants. It's Thanksgiving back in Canada and even though none of our families are religious I know I'd be having at least two huge home cooked meals. Man, it's really so hard traveling all over with my best friends playing punk songs every night and partying. Ha ha.

In Atlanta. This house is really cool, there are weird critters buzzing everywhere and they've got Poison Idea blaring. This is so fun. I have some crazy abdominal pain going on right now and it's freaking me out but fuck it. Everyone here is rad as hell and the show is getting packed so it should be sick.

OCTOBER 14: Just woke up... Huge drive to Jacksonville, I hope everything is set there. Atlanta is incredible... The south is wacky as hell. The show was great. Cheap Art ruled and a local rager Manic played an impromptu set because the show was going so well. Great time Josh really came through with a last minute show. Really want to play with his band Wymyns Prysyn next time we come here. This was actually one of the best shows we've ever played. We had so much food cooking and so many people showed up on a Sunday it was fucking perfect especially after North Carolina dropped.

OCTOBER 15: So we played in Jacksonville last night. It was a Monday night so we weren't expecting the biggest turn out. Played to about ten or fifteen people and the response was great. Played a new song for the first time and I'm really happy with it. We found out later that the bar is usually packed but someone was planning on coming to "shoot the place up" over something that happened the week before. When we heard this, CJ and I laughed thinking it was a joke. The dude replied with "the bartender shot a man dead right there a few weeks ago, a man died right where you're standing". Looked it up on Google and it was entirely accurate but had happened months earlier... regardless, it was fucked to hear. On our way to Pensacola. It's really fucking weird to think I'm in Florida right now.

OCTOBER 16: Pensacola was a pretty good turnout. Really good for being a Tuesday in a place we've never been. It was a vegan place and we got free burritos and a few beers. Someone came up to me after our set and said her boyfriend told her it was too violent to go up front to watch our band? I told her to tell him to stop fucking pigeonholing her. I think they argued the rest of the night. After our set there were like 15-20 kids skating out front and everyone was pulling crazy shit. We had a great time. Some dude had a concealed gun, which was super weird. Even weirder that he was just letting us hold it and shit? It's one hundred million fucking degrees driving through Alabama to New Orleans. I just saw an alligator in a swamp on the side of the highway... This place is trippy but everyone is really nice. New Orleans tonight!



OCTOBER 17: Cool art space show in New Orleans. Great response from everyone at the show. Really cool looking city. We went and saw a couple awesome bands at another bar later on. Byron was a rad dude, drove us around all night just to entertain us, which was incredible. On our way to Houston. I've never been this far from home. Just found out we picked up a show in Milwaukee before Chicago. We've all got into the groove of touring and we're getting along better than I think we ever have. Really fun every day.

OCTOBER 18: Hanging with Jaron in Houston. He just bought us food, which is so sick. Mangos is a small venue we haven't been to yet but it looks cool.

Fuck, it feels like we've been here forever. We were supposed to play an "aftershow" at a warehouse later tonight but it doesn't look like that's going to happen. Still playing tonight but we're just all super bored. Jaron hooked us up with a solid tab at the bar, which is awesome, this guy is super nice. The venue isn't as small as it looked.

Show was fun. Got wild 'cause it was a venue... got to smash bottles, etc. Partied with Jaron and his buddies. There was a hilarious drunk fight. By hilarious I mean the guys could barely fight each other because they were so drunk. The one dude's girlfriend kept jumping in and she was the best fighter of the bunch. She was just filling this dude in. it was pretty funny because everyone was so sloppy drunk. It tamed down and we partied hard. Great time, I really liked Ekstraktion. Looks like we might come back down for Badass Weekend in February.

I got way too loaded now, I'm cross-eyed riding shotgun. Austin is next, we'll see what's up there.

Holy fuck, pizza buffet for 5.65 and they have a fucking arcade. Unreal. I actually feel like I'm going to die. Jaron and the Houston crew destroyed us, the van smells like a gat damn armpit.

OCTOBER 20: Austin was weird as hell for most of the show. It was the most mixed up shit I've ever seen. It was like three gym-core bands that made me want to fucking die followed by some jazzy math-rock shit. Then out of nowhere right before we played like 15-20 punks walked in. Apparently the Vibrators had done a free show an hour earlier. Wish I would have known about it. Point being, our set ended up being really fun and we got to play for a room full of people. There were also two other great bands, one called Concrete but I got way too trashed to remember the other band names, which is lame but what can you do?

I went to downtown Austin before the show and there was a "Day of the Dead" street festival, which was actually pretty cool aside from the obvious bougie shit. Ended up losing the rest of the band for hours with a dead phone which was kinda shit, but Austin is big enough to look around for a while. Great show, pretty cool city. Dallas tonight.

Just hung at a Dallas bar/arcade for a while, I'm pretty trashed. Playing a Mexican bar tonight here. It looks pretty rad. Hopefully some kids come out, should be fun. There is a banner on the stage that reads "classes for concealed handgun license given here," ha ha ha Texas.

Show was weird. Last band ripped some metal stuff, but wacky as hell. The last week I've just been smoking cigarettes like a fucking chimney, and I quit for four years since this, so that sucks. I feel like my body is wearing down everyday until we play and then I'm fine. Staying with a rad couple in Dallas who have a dog named Neko, which is CJ's dog's name too. That's how uneventful Dallas has been: the highlight is a dog's name. Day off tomorrow, driving to Nashville. I never want to stop touring but this is a long one. I'm so burned out tonight. I think everyone is on the same page. I even miss Hamilton's lame social politics at this point. Bleeding from my mouth and ready for bed. More beers though.

OCTOBER 22: We went to the Dealey Plaza yesterday, which was my favourite tour experience yet. Really cool standing where JFK got his head blown to smithereens.

I was driving through a crazy ass storm for three hours to get to fucking nowhere Arkansas. We stopped to sleep. Another five or six hours today to Nashville.

It was so nice out today that I decided to drive again. Got three or so hours in. We've got a week straight of shows now until we're home. I haven't gone a single night without drinking. Hopefully I can last seven more days. Some dude in Pensacola said the venue we're playing in Nashville is one of the sketchiest places he's ever seen. Not sure if he's been to Baltimore but we'll just have to see. America is starting to become blurry. Same city settings with slightly different scenery. We're out of the swampland and into basically just Midwest cities so it's all just a van ride for me at this point.

Got to the Nashville venue, owl farm, and it is probably one of the top three best DIY venues I've ever played. The turnout wasn't huge but it's a fucking Tuesday. The first band were a bunch of dinks who just brought a bunch of crap to destroy while they pretended to play? Was really stupid. Get wild by all means but also play actual songs. We had so much fun playing and I added a bunch of songs onto the set 'cause I wanted to see if I had the ability after smoking for two weeks. Lungs felt great and I feel like we played pretty well. Conner really set up a cool Tuesday show. Fucked Ethos from Nashville were incredible. On our way to the "Pissbath" house, we're all stoked and ready to get fucked up drunk.

OCTOBER 23: Last night was so fun. Got a really good sleep somehow and now we're driving to St. Louis. John just found a religious comic book in a gas station bathroom. It's fucking hilarious. "These kids are into punk rock and think hell will be some kind of party". Dead-on description. Ha ha. Stupid is everywhere.

Well... That was the worst show we've ever played. Showed up and there were maybe ten kids there...it suuucked. There was a band of like sixteen-year-olds called Anti Prophet and they were actually rad. Good kids, their set was fun but... fuck that show sucked. We're in the van right now just dying laughing at the scenario. Who says you can't tour without blog hype? Ha ha ha.

A highlight of the night: we were standing outside of the van trying to bail on the guy who put the show on (who wouldn't stop apologizing and calling his own city shit... he's probably just the shit guy there)... and then a helicopter with a spotlight started tracking something right over our heads... And then a Mustang flew by with the spotlight on it and we heard the tires squealing around corners. I'm sure St. Louis has a punk scene somewhere. Tonight suuucked, get me out of here. To be fair... it literally can't get any worse.

OCTOBER 24: On our way to Milwaukee, we're going to be a couple hours late, hopefully that isn't a problem. We've been getting to houses and venues super early just to wait around. Hoping the show has a decent turnout or a good vibe. Last night was so bad that it was actually funny. Love watching Brandon drive if he's listening to Madmen or Cursed, ha ha.

We've been driving for almost six hours, got caught in traffic and just found out the show has to be done by ten. We're cutting it really close. Hopefully we'll be there at quarter after nine like the GPS says and there will still be a few people there. Fucking sucks we always go out and sit down and eat for two goddamn hours a day.

Got there on time and the show ruled, Justin and Marc are the raddest. We're at a punk bar with open mic and shit. We're gonna do a couple tunes, ha ha, this is sick. Giant beers too.

So we ended up doing an open mic set with house gear. The drum kit was so huge and Brandon was hitting roto-toms and cowbells the whole time. We could barely stand up but it was so fucking funny. Jesus.

This night keeps getting more fucking sick, everyone's buying us drinks and shit. Milwaukee turned out so fucking fun. X-Files pinball at the bar. This Justin dude is awesome and he's also late for work because we got him so fucked, ha ha.

OCTOBER 25: Found WWF wrestling arcade game I was looking for in Chicago, so fucking awesome. Finally...

OCTOBER 26: Played a matinee show at Albion house in Chicago. Max hooked us up huge. Free sandwiches, a great place to stay, and a really fun show. Next time we come down we'll have to hang more with him and Pat. Max gave me a giant bag of 7"s and tapes from his label, I'm so stoked on that. The other dude in his band Jack was extremely nice as well. I'll probably visit Chicago again, they seem like they have good shows all the time. I just wish I wasn't so brutal hung over from yesterday.

On our way to Columbus. The van is way tighter now because CJ's friend took a bus to Chicago and is riding with us back up to Canada. This would have been a lot easier if it was at the start of the tour. Kinda throwing a wrench into the finely oiled machine we had kicking, but whatever, it's just a few days.

Chicago was cool. Wish we had more time in the city but all the drives are a bit further now.

Starting to get pretty dark on this drive. My legs are numb from being propped up on a cooler for four hours. Wonder how the fuck I'm going to keep my head for three more days. I think CJ and I had had enough of each other before we left... Never mind now. I'm sure we'll get drunk and best friends again. All that matters is that we get to Columbus and we play.

Just arrived in Columbus the bar is pretty full which is rad! I've only seen Mickey from Nervosas so far but I hope a bunch of the crew comes down.

Such a weird vibe I don't get it. We can't use our own gear and shit? I don't understand. Killer of Sheep is kinda cool though.

OCTOBER 27: So ends up... last night fucking ruled, I fucking love Columbus. I got to see Jared, Kelsey, and Ian. Jeff Kleinman is always a blast to chill with. All of the Nervosas crew was there, it was great. Stayed over at 15th house again. Matt Tard is such an awesome dude, he was blackout again ha ha.

We stayed up all night at some party. Great time, wicked folks up here in Ohio. Did my laundry and we're hitting the road to Cleveland. Playing what we are told is the best venue in America, Now That's Class. Looking forward to meeting Tony Erba and seeing Cruelster, whom we just did a split live tape with. Good vibes in the van 'cause of the short-ass drive and as much as I love the road I'm looking forward to locking myself in my apartment with Amy for a few days. That's only a couple days from now and the tour has been incredible. There are some seriously genuine punks down here in 'merica. Fuck, Columbus always gives me good vibes.

Well all the good vibes are gone. The bar was in fact really cool but the show sucked. Cruelster is awesome but there were like maybe two people there plus bands? It fucking blew. I'm in the worst fucking mood, I just want to be home. So sick of my drinking and sick of cigarettes. I totally love touring and don't think I'll ever stop but tonight is a fucking grind.

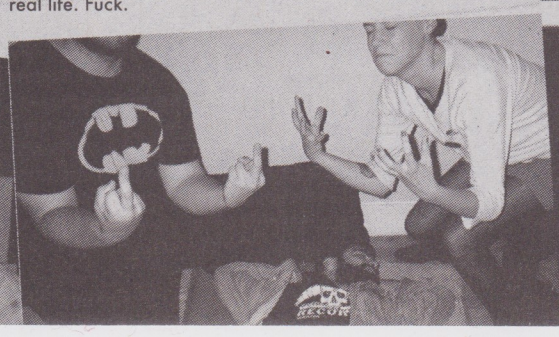
OCTOBER 28: Last day of tour. We got to Buffalo really early and we're just dicking around at some college hipster coffee shop. Makes me feel just like James St. N in Hamilton... that translates to me wanting to puke my guts out and shit on the bathroom floor. We're all itching to play and we're hoping the house show is a nice cap off to the tour. Ran into our buddy Malik from Buffalo and went to meet Ben from Lewd Dewdz at his work to say hey. That guy is always in an awesome mood. Looking forward to our record release show when we get home. The alternate art is done and I'm eager to see how it turned out.

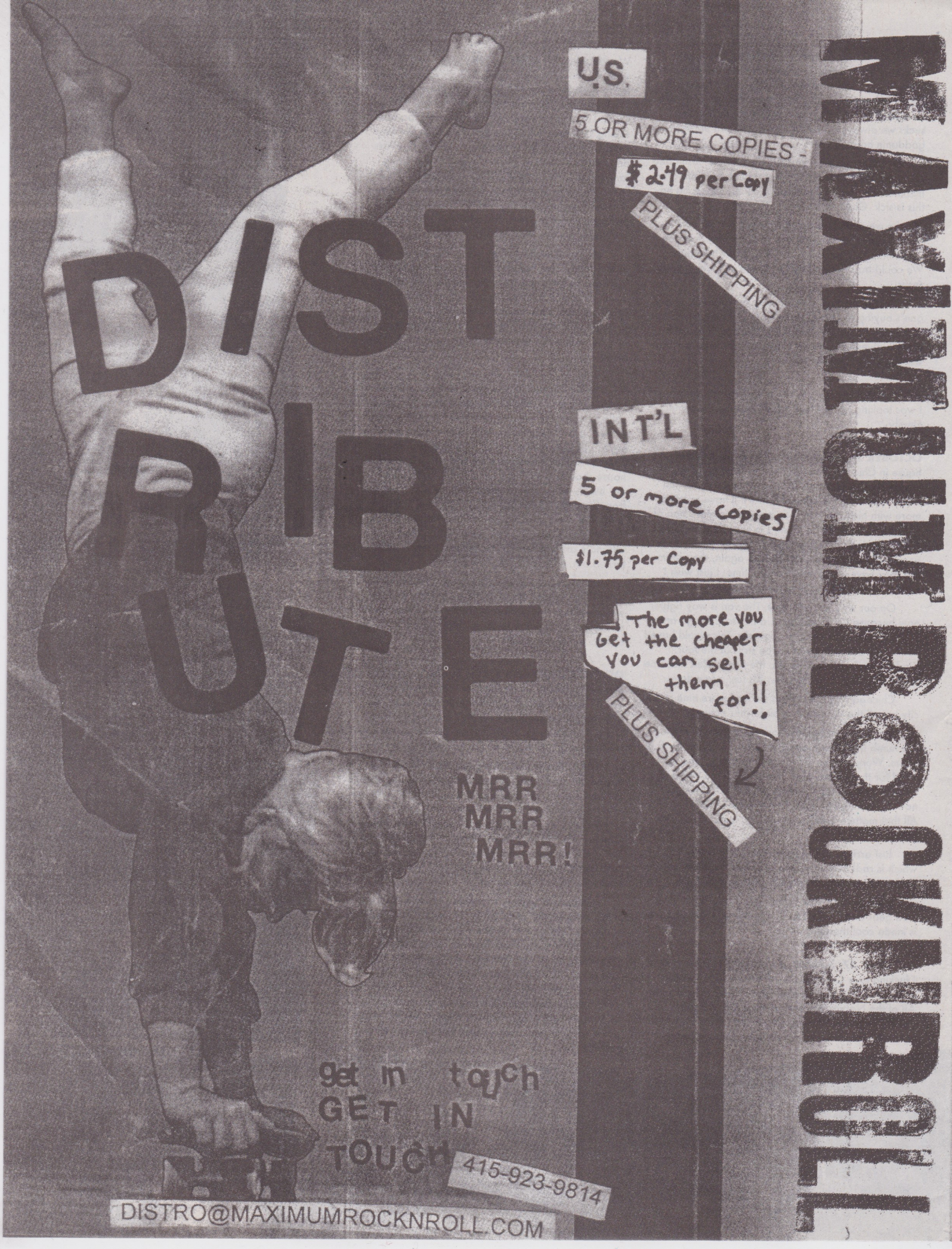
The show had a really really good turn out for a Monday and the band Bad People from Buffalo were really good. Ben really put the word out there and got people out to the show. Ben and Aaron are always fun to hang with.

OCTOBER 30: We crossed the border in a matter of minutes again. All in all the tour was a huge success. We all had a blast. A month was a really long time and there were moments where I'm sure everyone wanted to be home. Now that we are home I'm sure we'll all begin to dream of the next tour.

To be honest I feel like a lot of the things that happened have already been forgotten just because the tour was so fucking long. I remember thinking on several occasions, "I will remember this for the rest of my life" only to wake up with no real idea where I was or what had occurred. Some stand out moments are definitely linked to Brooklyn, Philly, Richmond, Atlanta, Houston and Milwaukee...but everywhere had something I liked about it.

Almost every show we played we met at least a few people that were really interesting and had some cool shit going on. There are also some parts of each punk scene that I hope to bring back to Hamilton and try out. For instance, Jake from Philly had a VHS zine with bands who played in Philly. That would definitely be something cool to see in our city. I also would really like to get an arcade game at our local punk record shop. I'm sure we'll be back out in May or the latest August. Back to the hell of real life. Fuck.

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BOOKS

Better Days: A Mental Health Recovery Workbook
Craig Lewis
81 pages • $16.99
Better Days Recovery Press
www.betterdaysrecoverypress.com

Better Days: A Mental Health Recovery Workbook is written by Craig Lewis, CPS. A.K.A. Crusty Craig to some. Craig has another book titled *You're Crazy*, which has more of the story of the personal struggle that informed this workbook, along with other first hand accounts of mental illness from the punk scene. You can find more information on his work and/or how to contact him at www.betterdaysrecovery.com.

Craig has written several guest columns for *MRR* over the years, only some of which I have read, but most of which I have related to on some note, or have understood deeply after spending time in the same social zones. He has shared very publicly that he has suffered from mental illness and trauma when he was younger and had a long and arduous recovery the story of which he is also very enthusiastic about sharing. The general feeling is that punk can be an incredibly open and accepting community, while at the same time being alienating, ignorant, and dismissive to peoples' cries for help, including his own, while also enabling people to continue destructive behavior. While many people disagree with this standpoint, Craig's experience is his own and I see the work that he does now as him reaching out to try and be the change he wants to see in the community. (Not to be all Michael Jackson *Man in The Mirror* about it.)

Much of the mainstream literature intended to help people through recovery or serve as a guide for self-help is ironically not geared toward punks, a classically troubled group of individuals. Partly because punks don't usually write them, and partly because punks don't like to be told what to do or what is good for them. (Like, remember when Mike just wanted a Pepsi? And his Mom decided what was in *his* best interest?) It also seems that a lot of these books are determined to create a catchall healing process for people, that in some ways cheapens the perseverance of the human spirit and individuality. That is what makes this workbook different. It is easier to listen to someone who is trying to help you when they have been there and can understand.

There are several style things about this workbook that I really like and think make it more effective and broaden the scope of ways people could use it as a tool. The title *Better Days* is essentially what the user envisions as the end goal for their recovery, to have better days than the ones before they begin their recovery, but leaving what that means open to interpretation. The author shares his idea of what Better Days means to him but acknowledges that every person's version of what "better" means varies. Then the book is split up into segments each covering a topic. For example, one section is titled "Dealing with Injustice". There is an introduction, which usually includes a brief explanation of why this idea is important to think about and then the author will often share his own experience and struggle with the subject. This is followed by a worksheet that has generally about three questions regarding how the person feels about the injustice they have faced, what they do to cope or change it, then a goal-oriented question to give the person something to think about when they are done filling in the sheet.

I know peer counseling/guidance is not a new idea but it is really helpful and refreshing to have the person writing acknowledge that they have had a hard time with the same thing. Partially because it makes it easier to know that someone else has a problem with it, and partially because you know they have actually found a way to work through it, and that it is not an emotional shot in the dark where you have to share all of your feelings not knowing if it is going to help at all. Like when you do an intake at a sliding scale therapy place and you sum up all of your problems and whine for fifteen minutes then they tell you someone will call you in two months to let you know if they might be able to find someone to maybe help you next year. Another thing that is nice about the style is that it is actually a guide and not a strict regimen. So the sections are set up so that the introduction to each section could be read to a group or shared between a couple of people and does not have to be something someone endures on their own.

It was my personal goal of this review to not complete the workbook and reveal all of my problems to my audience of peers because even if I did complete the workbook I believe that recovery takes a long time and for me to complete it, revel in all of my mentally stable glory, and review the book in a matter of a month, would be such a lie. That being said, I did complete some of the pages and felt like they were helpful in my personal development.

One of Craig's mentors wrote in the introduction that there "are so many excellent people in the punk rock community who would benefit from having a community where they can love punk rock and be supported in recovery from mental illness, trauma, and substance use." He followed this by sharing that, when attending Craig's events, he was "surprised by the number of people who turned out in their black leather jackets, studded belts, and spiky hair on cold and rainy evenings...not to hear any music but to hear a thirty-nine year old American punk rocker talk on mental heath, punk rock, and recovery." I would recommend this book to anyone who has ever wanted to read a book about recovery or self-help but was too embarrassed because it looks like your Mom's friend wrote it.

—Caitlin Kelly

Yeah, Well...
Joel Landmine
102 pages • $13.95
Punk Hostage Press
www.punkhostagepress.com

Why give a shit about Joel Landmine? We've met this archetype a thousand times before. He is that close friend who *just keeps fucking up*, like the coked-out-yet-endearing golden era of Justin Townes Earle. He is affable, bittersweet, and sometimes deplorable. He's a mess of a dude that has enough sense to write about it. So why give a shit about another fuck-up-turned-writer? The prize is in the perspective.

There are indelible landmarks in your memory that you wish you could blot out forever. Landmine is the guy that created those. And then exposes them.

More comfortable even than all those plush beds
of all those sweet pretty women,
to whom I'd left nothing to remember me by
but the fresh tattoo ink
I'd sweated on their fancy sheets

It's grotesque and jarring, but phrasings like those illuminate Landmine's real ability as a writer.

Comedy is where he checks himself. The self-effacing humor takes the edge off as he taunts and teases himself- for being that sad fuck listening to Morrissey, for catching himself in a pervy moment, or for sharing a bizarre place in time and space with an old lady. Yet, he somehow finds sweetness in the shitty situations he's created.

While Landmine's poetry is mostly autobiographical, he loses sight of the creative aspect of autobiographical storytelling. At times, he simply recounts a situation without artistic flex. It feels far less like a poetic endeavor, and more like bullshitting at the bar or tearing a page out of your roommate's diary.

For the technical dweebs out there, I take issue with the distractions obstructing the beginning of the book. The reader trips over editor's acknowledgements, author's acknowledgements, introduction, dedication page, table of contents, blank pages, and page of quotes before *finally* arriving at Landmine's work. There are *even more* quotes at the end of the book convincing us that Landmine is the shit. Landmine doesn't need to be propped up with pages of accolades when his writing could stand up by itself.

Landmine's poetry is for anyone with a sweet tooth for schadenfreude. The piles of bullshit he's gotten himself into make an interesting read. He twists things like tinfoil in his mind, and hands you the crumpled semblances of a broken down dream car, a child killer, the ex that haunts you, and a phlegm-covered pigeon. The storytelling loses its teeth at times, but the humorous self-flagellation is worth it.

—Beryl St. Jeanne

Don't Call It a Comeback: the Story of Stiff Nixon
Jake Cavellew
44 pages • $10.50
Two Fisted Industries
www.twofistedblog.wordpress.com

This comic tells the story of fictional early '80s punk band Stiff Nixon's decision to reunite after the members see their old band's name-dropped on a TV show thirty years later. The plot is minimal, but basically involves the members convincing each other to reunite, practicing, the singer almost dropping out at the last minute, stumbling on a show to play when a current punk drops by the drummer's record store and the story ends with them with the drummer counting off the first song. Honestly, there's not much to say about it: the artwork is adequate, the dialogue is heavy on corny "I can't believe these mild-mannered middle-aged professionals used to be *punk rockers*!" gags, the witty banter is rarely funny, and the band personalities (past and present) are annoyingly dude-like in a *Questionable Content* sort of way (with the female bass player's personality being a good example of the kind of lady-bro character a male comic would create). At best, it's toilet reading.

—Dan Goetz

Songs Only You Know: A Memoir
Sean Madigan Hoen
384 pages • $25.00
Soho Press

It's difficult to review a memoir without, in some way, feeling like you're judging the character of its author. And it's even harder to provide an objective critique when I relate to Sean Madigan Hoen's journey in *Songs Only You Know* in more ways than I'd like to publicly admit (just as I think many *MRR* readers probably do, too): you don't generally gravitate to "punk" if your life is peachy. Most of us, like Hoen (who fronted Detroit-area bands Thoughts of Ionesco, The Holy Fire, Leaving Rouge—and, more recently, Brooklyn-based Your Skull), came to our respective "scenes" with problems to spare. Hoen spends the majority of his memoir articulating the problems that he came to "punk" to find release from—his father's crack-cocaine addiction, his sister's suicidal depression, the urban decay of his hometown, his own self-destructive free fall.

Overall, Hoen writes well, with clarity and urgency and a musician's ear for rhythm. However, sometimes he strays into trying-too-hard-to-be-poetic territory (for example, when describing one of his girlfriends, Hoen writes, "The entirety of her seemed conscious in her welled eyes, a green soul-world of things gorgeous and passionate and totally unknown") but usually his writing is vivid and precise.

The best parts of the memoir are Hoen's depictions of his family and his hometown (Detroit and nearby Dearborn, MI may, in fact, be the most compelling characters in *Songs*)—his love and loyalty to whom and where he came from is palpable and, at times, powerful. I find this passage late in the book to be stunning:

"They all crossed my mind during those late-night drives, the people who'd have wept at the sight of me cruising, dead to myself, steering with my knee … until the sun became an undeniable fact, urging me home as the real world emerged: School buses and fresh-faced citizens in cars, the sweet lard aroma of doughnut shops … All of it seeming to exist for the uncertain purpose of some allegory that was happening inside me.

That's when I'd wonder if Caitlin [Hoen's sister] and my dad were witnessing me from another plane, where everything had already happened … I'd speak to one and then the other, as though they hovered at two different places in the sky."

His writing is beautiful during moments like these.

On the other end of the spectrum, Hoen's characterization of "punk" (shows, tour life, band practice) as well as his own drug and alcohol binges are much less interesting (How many shows need to be relived? How many drunken benders need to be documented?) What drags the book down is the length and prevalence of what I'll call Hoen's "war stories"—scenes of knucklehead behavior, which Hoen seems to both glorify and despise. And this is particularly frustrating, considering the strength of the above quoted passage. Some heavy-duty cutting (primarily of the repetitive "punk" and binge sections) and tightening (say, trimming the page-count down to a leaner two hundred and fifty, rather than its nearly four-hundred page bulk) could have made this memoir potentially excellent. In our age of rapidly diminishing attention spans, I'm confused as to why Hoen's publisher and editor chose to release such a longwinded version (on Amazon, I just discovered that Soho Press added thirteen more pages to the already three-hundred and seventy-one page "Advance Uncopyedited Edition" that I read—why?)

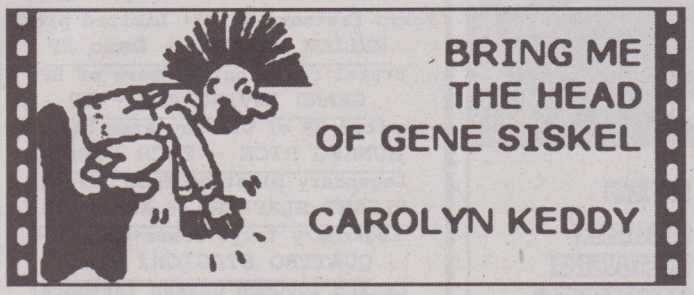
Besides this issue of length and redundancy, I think there's another deeper problem: that Hoen's story isn't as singular as he seems to think it is. At one point in the memoir after discovering information in his father's "rehab journals" concerning his family's lineage of trauma, Hoen reflects, "I believed there was something exquisitely fucked up about me." While Hoen is less guilty than most contemporary memoirists of creating a kind of pecking order of tragedy, this is another reason why the North American memoir is often troubling in its current "look at just at how 'fucked up' my life has been" form—because frequently autobiographical non-fiction from the US seems to present suffering as a sort of self-centered competition, rather than as something we, as human beings, all share and either learn to overcome with acceptance and a sense of humor, or continue to stay miserable.

As the poet and critic Kevin Young writes in his astute 2013 *Virginia Quarterly Review* article "Blood Nation" (which critiques disturbing race representations in "fake" memoirs), "Such books aren't concerned with reflection, but remain stuck in the despair they chronicle." While *Songs* is not "fake," in its less successful moments, it feels deeply "stuck" in its own "despair," like a whining howl on repeat.

Early in *Songs*, Hoen spins a Thoughts of Ionesco record for his buddy Andrew. His friend's reaction to his music is similar to my reaction to too much of Hoen's book: "Andrew wasn't much for my music. 'Wild shit,' he said, just basically waiting for it to end." While I feel for the real-life Hoen and wish him the best, like Andrew, I also became bored with the "wild shit," the repetitive examples of substance abuse and "punk" misbehavior that overshadow the much stronger, more sensitive perceptions about what it means to survive and to subsequently heal.

—Vincent Poturica

MOVIES



IT'S NOT FUNNY ANYMORE

We Are the Best! is the best movie I have seen this year. That it happens to be a film about three thirteen-year-old punks in Stockholm, Sweden in 1982 just makes it better. The greatness is in its simplicity. It is the story of two friends who are outcasts. They get called names. Older boys tell them they are not pretty. Girls at school tell them punk is dead. Yet, they seem somewhat accepting of the way they look and they like punk so they don't care.

I can relate. When I first started getting into punk, I was told punk was dead. That was 1979. It didn't stop me. That's the thing I like about Bobo and Klara. They don't let anyone tell them what they can't like or do. When the boys in the metal band Iron Fist show up to rehearse at the youth center they immediately insult the girls who are just having fun by themselves. Bobo and Klara take action. The boys didn't sign up for the rehearsal space. Bobo and Klara sign up and point out to the guys in charge the mistake. They have to kick Iron Fist out and allow the girls to rehearse since rules are rules.

Bobo and Klara enjoy playing so much, they decide to form a band. They don't know how to play or what to do, but they write a song anyway. At a school talent show they see Hedvig perform a classical guitar piece. The school kids boo her, but she keeps on playing. Bobo and Klara invite her to be in the band.

There are some cute adolescent moments. The girls' parents embarrass them. They get drunk for the first time. They fight over a boy. But as we all did they get through it. They go on to have a great first show. When the youth center manager tells them after the performance "you are not the best." They reassure each other, "we are the best." (magpictures.com/wearethebest)

If I picked the title for the documentary **Every Everything: The Music, Life & Times of Grant Hart**, it would be "But I'm Not Bitter." No doubt about it Hart has dealt with a lot of shit. There is a disclaimer at the end of the film stating, "the views expressed in this film are presented as both satirical and tongue-in-cheek, and are meant to offend, slander, or libel absolutely no one." I hope that sentiment is true. There is a sarcastic tone in his voice that seems to say otherwise.

Every Everything: The Music, Life & Times of Grant Hart is less a documentary than an extended interview interspersed with clips of Hart's bands Hüsker Dü and Nova Mob, solo performances and past interviews. It is like the viewer gets to spend three days with Hart as he lays everything he thinks about himself on you. Of course you would accept that offer in a heartbeat, but after a while it gets a bit overwhelming. I am interested in hearing Hart's point of view, even if I am somewhat skeptical when he starts getting arrogant and comparing himself to Marcel Duchamp.

There is a great segment in **Every Everything: The Music, Life & Times of Grant Hart** that portrays Hart discussing and demonstrating his collage style. Then things get a little uncomfortable when asked what he would call the collage. "I would title that two hundred and fifty dollars" he replies before going on a rant about other musicians who use the Hüsker Dü brand to forward a musical career. Hart spouts great quotes like "It's a good thing to say that you're influenced by Hüsker Dü. That's your skinny tie. Wear it proudly." As well as "This Halloween I'm going out as a Hüsker Dü-influenced millionaire."

Every Everything: The Music, Life & Times of Grant Hart is directed by Gorman Bechard who did **Color Me Obsessed: A Film About the Replacements** in 2011. That was a film about the band that contained no interviews with band members or any of the band's music. Bechard has been experimenting with the rather lame format of the band documentary. It is nice to see someone start kicking that corpse. Hopefully, he'll hit on the right amount of irreverence and fandom to flip the format on its head. However, this film could do without the animated reenactment of the infamous blue paint show in Chicago.

I want talented, interesting, weird people to get all the money. Grant Hart should have a bunch. All the athletes, bankers and reality stars shouldn't have any. It sucks that that's how the world operates. Hopefully, Hart got some of that bitterness off his chest with this documentary. (everyeverything.com)

Ralph Steadman was introduced to the world through the artwork he did in association with writer Hunter S. Thompson. He says so himself. The first person he met in the United States was Thompson and it was the only person he needed to meet. **For No Good Reason** looks at Steadman's career while constantly gazing in the rearview mirror at that relationship.

Steadman artistic career began in England. When he got the call for an assignment to illustrate an article Thompson was writing about the Kentucky Derby, he found a kindred spirit. Both men were adventurous and enjoyed indulging in all types of substances. While Thompson gradually became more aware of his perceived personality, Steadman was less of a recognizable celebrity. He was also more liberal. He began to use his art to make political statements. His art and his politics took him in many directions. One of the more interesting was a biography of Leonardo da Vinci that Steadman wrote in the first person as though he were da Vinci.

Although Steadman is more verbally interesting than most artists, it still gets a bit dull listening to him talk about his art. That is why there is so much of **For No Good Reason** focused on his relationship with Thompson. The two are quite outrageous together and the stories are wild. The inclusion of Johnny Depp as interviewer and narrator adds almost nothing except a pleasant voice.

Not consequently the best scene of **For No Good Reason** is watching Steadman create a new piece of artwork. He starts with a splash of ink and builds it into one of his infamous creatures. He discusses his method of allow the painting to reveal itself to him. He starts each with a similar method, but the elements chance help take the drawing to new places. This fascinating demonstration alone makes **For No Good Reason** worth watching. (fornogoodreasonmovie.com)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, % Maximum Rock N Roll, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. No guest list necessary. www.carolynkeddy.com

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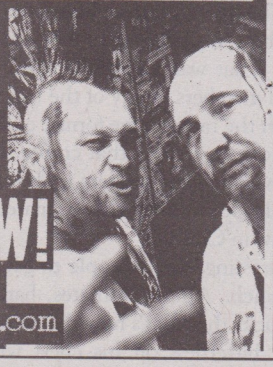

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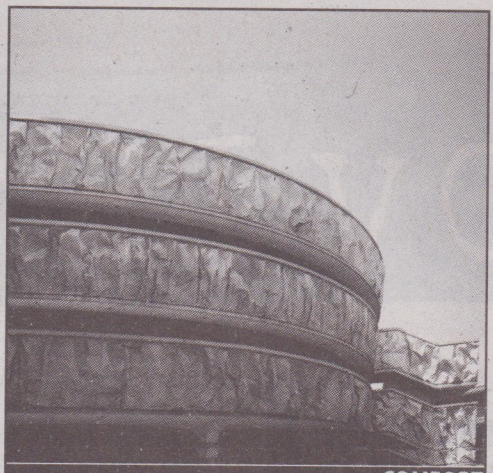

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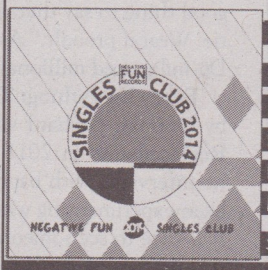

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ABORTICIDIO – "Aborticidio" EP

This EP is an absolutely glorious train wreck, a stinking monument to the shit and sleaze that made punk dangerous. The A-side is composed of three quick thrashers; all pots-and-pans clattering drums, fuzz-box riffage and slightly sing-songy vocals wrapped up in a package that's equal parts RUDIMENTARY PENI, CONFUSE and ATOXXXICO. The flip side kicks off with a slower, more menacing track that could have been culled from CONFUSE's *Stupid Life* 12" and closes out with the fantastic "Let's Dance to the Noise Punk," an infectious approximation of a SWANKYS '77 punk rave up that doesn't sound a bit like anything else on the record but fits right in regardless. Mexico's punk scene is absolutely on fire right now, and this is one of the very best new records to emerge from it. Total "Best of 2014" fodder, and maybe the straight-up punkest record I've heard this year. (AU)
(General Speech)

AD SKINNER – "On the Nod" EP

Although only punk pseudonyms are used on the cover, I have been assured this group contains members of all your favorite Australian bands. Super direct, no frills HC, somewhere between SHIRTLESS THUGS and SHITTY LIMITS, or even CAREER SUICIDE maybe? It's got that bored in the seventies shopping center incessant treble attack that the LIMITS espouse, tempered by added straight ahead almost CIRCLE JERKS fervor. Except it's repetitive and relentless, which seems like an intentional stance, but it hasn't got the wildness of any of the aforementioned acts. It somehow seems sort of flat out yet also restrained, like a stalled car with the roar of the engine turning over and over. Listening to this record was like waiting for something to happen that never will. Moronic sounds for stalled minds is sometimes the answer to many of life's problems (see SICK THINGS (AU) / BOBBY SOXX etc etc) but sometimes a record is just something you will play a few times and file/forget. I think this is their demo pressed to wax, so possibly the future will be more incendiary? Let's hope, because while this is quite alright, it's not worth blowing your life savings on import taxes… (LG)
(3xReaper)

AGE OF WOE / 100 YEARS – split EP

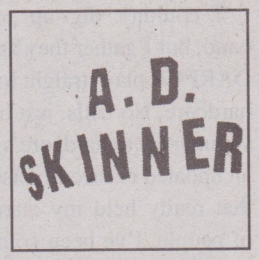
Oh boy, where to begin with this one… two sides of "catchy" metallic hardcore from Sweden, I think this is supposed to have a crusty edge but I'm really not getting that. AGE OF WOE take a death metal tone into the realm of groovy hardcore, with a mix that basically turns all the guitars into mush when they aren't doing leads. This is some windmill-friendly shit, and I'm truly embarrassed for the band when I say that the vocals kinda remind me of misogynist crabcore darlings ATTILA. 100 YEARS don't fare any better, kicking their side off with some arpeggiated synth-bass that *really* misses the mark, not to mention the jazzy funk lick that comes in halfway through. Like AGE OF WOE, they just feel like they're trying too hard, and the result is another example of what I'm going to start referring to as dark dogecore: "such tuff. wow. much evil." (WB)
(Give Praise / Suicide)

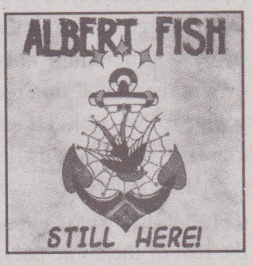
ALBERT FISH – "Still Here!" CD

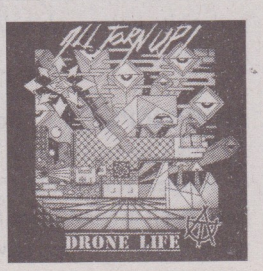
Street punk rock and roll from Portugal here (vocals in English). This reminds me of RANCID without the raging bass lines, and the more pop punky sounds of BOUNCING SOULS. There is a lot of this genre around past and present. Also this is mostly a collection of vinyl releases. This is good but probably more essential for locals. (RL)
(Raging Planet)

ALL TORN UP – "Drone Life" EP

This is an exciting, politically charged release from a New York City band operating outside of the current hype bands/labels/scene the city is currently known for. The EP is a much more straight forward record than I was







expecting, verse chorus verse bangers at hyper speed that slow down now and again for good measure. The vocals at times are a bit BORN AGAINST-ish although the similarities end there. Worth a listen or catch them at a show for some straight forward punk action. (RM)
(self-released)

THE AR-KAICS – "Sick And Tired/Cut Me Down"

Capable-as-fuck '60s-inspired garage from the AR-KAICS, a name becoming increasingly familiar in the singles bins. Things are moody in all the right ways on this 45, with the A-side being a mid-tempo number, flirting with darkness and longing yet still managing to induce heavy convulsions. The flip's slower pace doesn't diminish things in the slightest though, as the neg-vibe wins out over anything heard on the flip. Totally recommended if you're into DEMONS' CLAWS and the like, or just want a groover to brood to. (MC)
(Hidden Volume)

AUTUUS? / DARFÜR – split EP

I couldn't dig up much info on either band, but I gather they are both from Finland. DARFÜR play straight forward, noisy Finnish hardcore. No frills, just hardcore. I liked their vague nods to hardcore's past. AUTUUS? has an updated classic Finnish D-beat/crust sound that really held my attention. As with a lot of people, I've been completely burnt out on the crusty sounds for a while, so it's always exciting when I hear someone doing it slightly different and I enjoyed this. (MH)
(Filthy Rat / Bad Hair Life)

BAD PARTY – "Star Children/Enemy (Mace in the Face)"

A blast from the vibes of the past, BAD PARTY harness BIG BLACK and PAILHEAD and regurgitate that energy with the swagger of new millennium noise rock hipsters…the difference is that this record isn't necessarily trying to be cool. This record *is* fukkn cool. One riff per song, drilled into your earholes with the subtlety of…well, of a drill. Vocals are distorted in a very '80s industrial manner and the rest of the sonic package is drum machine and white noise—oh *hell* yeah. (WN)
(Modern Ape)

BANNER PILOT – "Souvenir" CD

This disc is slick pop punk. Call in MTV2 or Warped Tour punk if you will. These guys have been around since the mid '00s. I liked them early on, but haven't followed them much since. Anyways this is a really great pop punk release! In the vein of classic BLINK and LAG WAGON, this has catchy choruses, great guitar hooks, and solid well-crafted songs. If you are looking for something "in your face" or "twisted" this isn't for you. But if you like the glory years of BLINK, THE ATARIS, and THE GET UP KIDS get this now. (RL)
(Fat Wreck Chords)

BEARMACE – "Cold Ones" EP

Mid-tempo hardcore with a nice dose of the fuzzz, this is a cool little nugget from Montreal's BEARMACE. Throat-ripping vocals set a nice pace from the start, and there's some solid riffs to sink your teeth into along with a solid rhythm section. A great mix brings it all together, and the guitars have a nice layer of noize, although to be honest, I think that could have been emphasized a bit more. A minor complaint, all things considered, and certainly not one that should stop anyone from checking this out. (WB)
(Zaxxon)

BIKINI KILL – "Yeah Yeah Yeah Yeah" LP

Yeah Yeah Yeah Yeah exists as a document in time. It sounds like it was recorded in a basement on a four track (it was). It sounds stumbling but determined. It stands as proof of the beginnings of a turning point in punk that won't fade. The second side, which initially held equally furious tracks by HUGGY BEAR, has been replaced by a collection of live tracks and practice tapes that fill in the gaps in a history that already seemed solid and transparent. The process of forming, the do-overs, the lineup changes the song morphage that occurs in the amoebus moments of "We're starting a band right now." I saw Kathleen Hanna speak at a Kathy Acker reading and she told a story about Kathy telling her to start a band because people didn't pay attention to spoken word artists. This thread is revealed on the second side, on a track called "I Busted in Your Chevy Window," a spoken word screed from a Gilman show which speaks to the violent fantasies born out of being continually harassed by people in cars. "Why" is the quiet in your room, where feeling like shit manages to form into a song, the first moment of catching that power. "Fuck Twin Peaks" is a total basement rager, a reaction to lame trends in a small town. The second side begins in disorientation with Billy singing a song called "George Bush is a Pig" and then ends with a song Tobi sings, called "Not Right Now," that comes off as the most clamoring first practice style, complete with jagged starts and stops. Some of the tracks are pre-Billy and catch the band in a moment of Kathleen playing bass and Kathi playing guitar (Tobi on drums). The reissue in its entirety acts as both an artifact and a discovery, further proving that bands and movements start somewhere and there's no right or wrong it's just an action. There was this one time, right after I quit or got kicked out of some band or something, Tobi was bugging me about starting a new band immediately. I dribbled out some line of excuses to which she said you have to do whatever you can with whatever you have right now. This is something that repeats in my head constantly, and it's an idea that is the beginning of everything. (MM)
(Bikini Kill)

BLACK PANTIES – "Mississippi" flexi

Gah! I've been following BLACK PANTIES through their shitty little tapes released on Lumpy Rex for a while now, and I was stoked to get this trashy flexi for review. On this record they throw out three quick, straightforward rock'n'roll influenced stabs that are over before you can think about it too much. Something about 'em always reminds me of FREESTONE updated for the new slimy punk fucks. The band sings shit about driving their car into the river and calling out fuckin' posers. It's all the quality you've come to expect. Total trash! (GH)
(Lumpy)

BLÅSLAMPA – "Håll Käft Och Hårda" EP

Cut the shit, start the pit one-two hardcore from Sweden. Blåslampa, (Blowtorch) play classic Swedish guitar hammered thrash with the same drilling, rapid fire guitar scratching that surfaces anywhere between "Progeria Power" by ANTI-CIMEX and INGRON HUTLOS, through to the earliest ETA recordings, but fired out with the appropriate youthful kickstart over wonderfully dumb and simplistic songs. The harshly yelled Swedish also recalls a classic '83 Sweden sound, but hits a few clunky notes as it crudely barks a top the quick six tracks. Without understanding and being able to follow Swedish the shouted choruses make it even sound more chaotic and random, but that flailing adds more character than distraction. Fun debut with lyrics entirely in Swedish. (KS)
(Rundgång / mut)

BLOTTER – "Under Armour '77" EP

Austin, TX has some great bands, and there's no doubt BLOTTER is one of them. In my opinion, when the term "no nonsense hardcore" is used appropriately, it applies to bands who don't have to lay it on thick with some sort of contrived shtick, bands who are inadvertently themselves. In BLOTTER's case, a general sense of frustration is what seems to drive these songs. Some extremely observant lyrics touching on self-obsession, social desperation, depression and overall disgust, every single word is intentional. As far as music and songwriting, they are not sticking to a single regimen, or concise genre, but pulling from all walks of punk and hardcore and making damn sure it's a powerful outcome. Sure, they have pogo parts; sure, they have some breakdowns. But nothing is over simplified or dumbed down for you, listener. Although the sleeve artwork and fold out poster are not as "to scale" as was intended by the band, it's still the most interesting and detail-oriented punk record art I've seen this year. Find and buy. (KR)
(Erste Theke Tontrager)

BODYFATHER / MNT ISL – split EP

Very early '90s, neo-grunge rock / post-hardcore / emo split by two Atlanta bands. MNT ISL sounds a lot like a band that you'd hear on a Clinton-era Skin Graft release except with *very* bored neo-grunge vocals. Although, their backing vocals amused me as they reminded me of Don Knotts! I dunno how "Mr Limpet" became a '90s "post-hardcore" icon but he *did*. BODYFATHER plays faster and nabs riffs from NIRVANA's *Bleach* (the goddamn LED ZEPPELIN of the 2010s) and maybe TAD. These guys play much more angular rock, which isn't super original, but at least it's decent. Their second song is more '90s emo á la SHOTMAKER, which sounds much better. Lots of disjointed chords, big bass and ever shifting rhythms. (JD)
(No Breaks)

BOMBSITE – "1994" CD

I was ready to hate this for sounding out of date, until I read the press sheet and saw that this band existed in 1994 hence the title. These guys were on the *No Slow… All Go!* comp out of Minneapolis from 1995. There was recently a reunion fest, so these guys rounded up demo tracks and the two comp songs for this limited release. This sounds very early '90s like JAWBREAKER, CRIMPSHRINE, FIFTEEN, and that whole slew of bands from back then. This is decent for what it is, that considered. By no means essential and this would have been more exciting as a vinyl release for most, but fans of the early '90s and locals won't be disappointed here. (RL)
(self-released)

BONGONYA / INFLATABLE BEST FRIEND – split EP

YES! BONGONYA play them some pretty heavy psych / surf (heavy on the psych!) There is some definite wizardry here, switching gears every 30 seconds, pretty flawlessly without an air of superiority or cheese. INFLATABLE BEST FRIEND sounds like young kids doing a really good job, after listening to their dads collection of STEVE ALBINI's work, and playing some quirky, spastic, bass heavy punk. The sound quality on their side was pretty low, but all in all, this was a great split! (DZ)
(Don't Panic It's A Distro)

BRUISER QUEEN / THE TURN IT OFFS – split EP

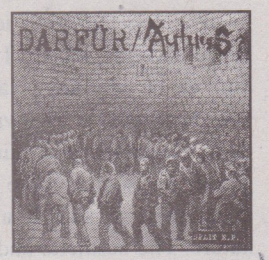
Two Rock'n'Roll units from the United States Of America unite for the pleasure of 300 members of the International Association of Asshole Record Buyers. These TURN IT OFFS tracks were recorded waaaaay back in 2007, but they play basically timeless shit of the fuzzy, surfy garage punk (modern definition) variety. BRUISER QUEEN wins the battle, if only because they're infinitely more spastic than the competition on the flip, featuring sharp guitar buzz and some new-wave infected female yelps. Neither band shakes the core of Earth, but they don't offend either. (MC)
(Miss Molly Music)

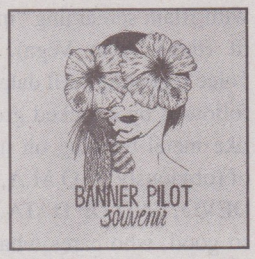
CHAOS ORDER / WEREWOLF CONGRESS – split EP

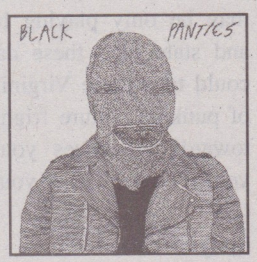
In the ever important battle of "which side is better?" CHAOS ORDER handles this one with ease. Balancing bleak nihilism with aggression CHAOS ORDER jump off the record with two tracks influenced by traditional hardcore not unlike SICK OF IT ALL or BOLD but with the negative influence of INTEGRITY. WEREWOLF CONGRESS on the other hand offer up a pair of duds that are a bit over the top with the modern, emotive, epic song structure. Not terrible and could follow COMEBACK KID or CHAMPION on a play list, just small doses for me please. (RM)
(Blasphemour)

CHARLES DE GOAL – "Algorythmes" LP

CHARLES DE GOAL morphed out of the French new wave scene, and rose from the ashes of avant garde electro outfit C.O.M.A. after its dissolution in 1979. First came the debut, *Algorythmes,* in 1980, followed by more records in 1982, 1984, 1985 and 1986, all on the French label New Rose. The releases had little if any revealing information, they never played live, and no one seemed to know who was actually in the band. Eventually Patrick Blain was revealed as the main creative force behind CDG and his work today has gained the recognition he was perhaps too shy to expect back then. Opener "Exposition" feels like a manifesto of sorts as it's a perfect description of what is to follow: a supremely well-written exposition of one man's audio vision. And that's precisely why these tracks are so well constructed, because it's not three or four people trying







to piece together their ideas, it's all coming from the same source. I can almost imagine him as he rearranges and reconstructs the sounds of what is his own multi-dimensional, dark, electronic post-punk cold wave Lego glacier—it sounds more like an architectural experiment in sound, a concept album by nature. The aesthetic and style of this audio-visually is also tastefully conceptual—from the geometrically repetitive black and white cover that fits the minimal repetitive basslines, to the futuristic vocals, austere beats and mechanical bleeps, that perfectly accompany the themes of the lyrics. "L'Homme-Pierre" and "Ralentissement Sur L'autoroute" are bleak and minimal, with a chilling post-apocalyptic requiem piano tune and vocals coming from the last man standing at the end of the world. The B-side has more guitar work, while "Modem," the LP closer, ends with Blain screaming "modem" in an ecstatic fit (think Alan Vega), then an automated voice repeating "All data has been destroyed" followed by a locked groove of what sounds like metal banging on metal. Epic! For fans of (obviously) C.O.M.A., BERURIER NOIR, DEVO, END OF DATA, but really, this LP is so good, who cares what it reminds you of? (LA)
(Danger)

CLOSE TALKER – "So Am I" LP

Dudes making some emo dude tunes with a posi '90s noodly fuzzed out rhythm. Pretty gnarly when it all comes together. The vox remind me of bands like the USED or a lot of that other nu-emo bullshit that drove me to hardcore in my freshman year of High School. The musicianship is gratuitous with nods to bands you were probably fine forgetting. LIT may be only playing bowling tournaments and state fairs these days but maybe they could take these Virginia dudes on a ghosts of punkmas future frightening to steer them towards influences you wouldn't take off your iPod for fear of your friends playing DJ. (DV)
(Stay Sweet)

COLD INSTITUTION – "Never Let Go" EP

If you absolutely prefer your punk dark, this EP will probably do something for you, but it sounds unfinished to me. At first I thought the guitar was too buried in the mix, but after doing a bit of research I learned that they have no guitars, but two bassists. I'm not the type of punk who requires a conventional lineup of instruments in a band. In fact, on principle, I advocate challenging anything conventional. But I feel like there's a bit too much space here. The song arrangements and ideas seem developed, but the outcome is not as effective as I think it could be. COLD INSTITUTION is from Finland, but the depressive lyrics are sung in English. The tones are icy cold and the drumming is solid and propulsive. There are some mesmerizing moments in "Barely Breathing" to get lost in, and "Dressed Up in Uniforms" rises into a pretty compelling song, but I'm still left feeling like this EP is lacking. (MA)
(Bad Hair Life)

CRETIN 77 / DESTRUCTORS – "Divide et Impera" split CD

Tight and loud and UK Oi!-ish punk from Northamptonshire's CRETIN 77 who remind me of everything from COCK SPARRER to SUBHUMANS UK to the Dead Kennedys. Their JOY DIVISION cover is good, but really do we need *another* cover of "Transmission"? At least they coulda done it in a different language like Faroese. DESTRUCTORS are straight up Oi! and take a good sarcastic look at the usual UK "honor" of "country and queen." At other times they're rowing too close to the dreaded bay of bar rock. Their last tune is an OK ballad flying somewhere between the POGUES and the last AMEBIX record. But wait… they sneak a bonus track which is a good charged up punker. Altogether decent, but not always the type of Oi!/punk stuff you'll wanna put your boots and braces and shout from the terraces to. Though, points for the trippy HAWKWIND-looking artwork. (JD)
(Rowdy Farrago)

CROOKED BANGS /. SECRET PROSTITUTES – split EP

I was unsure what to expect from a band called SECRET PROSTITUTES, so I put on the CROOKED BANGS side first. From the first four taps of the kick drum and the sweetass bass line, I already knew I was going to love this. It's got a vibe not unlike SONIC YOUTH's "Kool Thing." The French vocals, (which are fuckin' lovely, by the way), easily swing from an awesome croon to a nasty growl, and I wish there was more than one song, or any information at all about the band, but there is not. As soon as I heard the vocals from SECRET PROSTITUTES, I remembered who this band was. A Texas three piece that sings in Indonesian, and the music is fast, spastic as fuck, and rocks, uh, really fuckin' well. This is easily my favorite thing I've reviewed in almost a year. My only wish would be to have a lyric sheet by the bands so I can pretend to sing along. I think I listen to this every day at least twice. Get it get it get it! (DZ)
(Erste Theke Tontraeger)

CRUEL FRIENDS – "Mittags in Deutschland" EP

Don't let the cute baby on the cover fool you, this is some gnarly, grinding hardcore in the vein of SVFFER or HEXIS, without the latter's pesky demoniac vibes. There's something in the waters of Central Europe right now that's making everyone go fast as fuck, and I'm certainly not gonna complain, though here this only lasts about ten seconds before plunging into one of the best, heaviest breakdowns I've heard in quite some time (and that's coming from someone who's very anti-breakdown as a rule). After that, there's no letting up, just a raging, masterful blur of modern German hardcore with great tone and just enough dynamics to keep things flowing. Lyrically, the band manages to be inventive and off-the-wall without feeling silly. Damn good, to be sure, and I'll look forward to more. (WB)
(Meta Matter / Kink)

DASHER – "Go Rambo/Time Flys"

DASHER dish out two tracks of seething rock'n'roll punk with a healthy dose of gothy ick. The guitar leads and wailing vocals peg lend the songs a certain rawk swagger, while to pulsing rhythm section is more of a punk organ. However, between the reverb, the chorus pedals, the tasteful synth touches and the cavernous sound everything has (this recording sounds really good), there's a frosty blanket draped over the shoulders of these Georgia youths. And some eyeliner. "Go Rambo" is perhaps better because it is shorter and punchier, but "Time Flys" is plenty menacing. Unfortunately, both songs suffer from somewhat weak lyrics, but the presentation is overall very good. Yes please. (LP)
(Die Slaughterhaus)

DAVIDIANS – "Born 2 Chewz" EP

DAVIDIANS were formed in the wake of DOUBLE NEGATIVE's break up, and you can hear the influence of that songwriting here, but this isn't just DOUBLE NEGATIVE 2.0. The new guitarist adds a darker almost

post-punk vibe. There's also a more technical *My War* era BLACK FLAG worship sound that is much different from DOUBLE NEGATIVE's more straightforward punk sound. There are a lot of tempo changes and dissonant parts that are reminiscent of the BIRTHDAY PARTY too. Four solid songs, nothing game changing, but if you were into DOUBLE NEGATIVE at all you'll probably enjoy what they have got themselves into this time around. (KC)
(Deranged)

DEAD SKULL – "Blam!" CD

This two-piece has a cool sound. It is lo-fi with big rock aspirations. The music has a MC5-ish guitar with '90s alternative rock vocals. The combo sounds interesting together, but the simplicity of the whole thing keeps it fresh. (CK)
(self-rleased)

DEKODER – "Flowers to Blossom" LP

This band has always been hard to pinpoint, which makes it all the more enticing. I can definitely hear a lot of classic goth rock / new wave influences in their music, (not like that is a bad thing!), it's strong, driven by an amazing rhythm section, sincere and innovative without posturing or sounding forced. Emotional lyrics with beautifully layered clean vocals, feedback and synth intros kept to a reasonable minimum, guitars have just that oh so perfect amount of distortion. They have found a sound all their own and I sit here as the record ends just wanting more. *Highly recommended.* (AP)
(Chaos Rurale)

DERBY DOLLS – "Stinke Frau" EP

This is like DEVO played by RANCID, with definite herk-jerk glimmers, but in the end it leans more towards '90s pop punk than anything else. I keep wishing it was a little more awkward, maybe a little weirder, and then it just gets popper and more anthemic. They do it well its just not my jam. (MM)
(Erste Theke Tontrager)

DIE KREUZEN – "Cows and Beer" EP

Easily one of the most crucial Midwest hardcore EPs of the '80s, DIE KREUZEN absolutely exploded right out of the gate with a demented bent on the then-present-day model. Their songs were off kilter but no less ripping than their East or West Coast counterparts, and the guitars were from so far out of left field (no surprise that they were the direction that they did after a few records) that I can easily imagine unsuspecting punks not really knowing what to do with the band. The subsequent LP sets the standard for thinking punks' hardcore, and the treatment these tracks are given on that record is arguably better than the ones heard here (a subject of much drunken debate), but this six song banger is the very definition of the term "classic." It's been 30 years…*thirty fukkn years*…and "Think for Me" still gives me chills—for context, this recording is as old now as Hank Williams' "Jambalaya (On the Bayou)" was when DIE KREUZEN dropped their wax debut. Barbarian gave this a proper re-release a few years back, and then Beer City repressed the thing to death for record store day this year. I mention that because now there are 6,000 more copies floating around the world so you can rock to this banger for a reasonable price….liner notes from three of the dudes, one of which starts with "Man, we were kids…" (WN)
(Beer City)

DIE RÖTZZ – "You're Black and Blue" LP

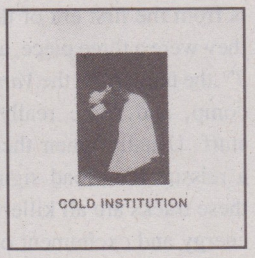
Energetic but mediocre garage punk with shitty dull instrument tones (though I do like the bouncy basslines), deep, scummy vocals, and rockabilly song names like "Whomlette," "Rot 'n' Roll," and "Tombstone Bullets." About a third of the LP (all on the B-side) is somewhat redeemed by decent riff-writing, but the rest is forgettable. Maybe akin to a scenario in which GG ALLIN played in the contemporary Southern garage scene, and Deranged asked them to do a record. (DG)
(Race!)

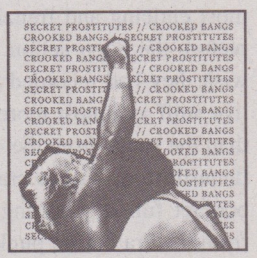
DIRTSHEATH – "Same Old Shit" CD

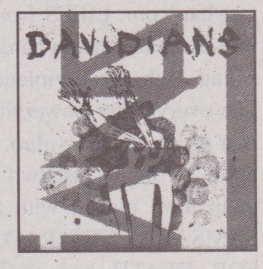
DIRTSHEATH hail from the almighty Deutschland and play a type of NYHC. With the help of Google translate I figured out that the press flyer included with the CD describes their sound as "the music of WARZONE with the attitude of SLAPSHOT." This may be true to some degree, but DIRTSHEATH has definitely forgotten the struggle *and* forgotten the streets. The sound is really overproduced and the guitar riffs sound similar to what I imagine a hardcore setting on a Line 6 amp would sound like. The song "Total War" tells George W. Bush "to be a man" and that Kim Jong should "…let the atomic dildo slip into [his] cute, fucking ass!" This came out in 2014 mind you. If you love NYHC, Guitar Center and outdated political insults then maybe this is just the thing for you. I think I'll just stick to WARZONE. (KC)
(Steeltown)

DISGUSTI – "Intro" EP

Holy smokes! Five racks in five minutes of ripping, unhinged hardcore—this is fucking great! Pummeling drums and feverish riffs that send you spinning, with menacing vocals from the gutter, sharp like a butterfly knife. These guys storm in from Hamilton, Canada and their stripped down formula of demented-sounding hooks and steamroller jams has me gripped. The intro and self-titled track sum up their short, fast and loud no-frills attitude but "No Great Mischief" is the vicious beast that punches at the end of Side A, violently shaking your carnage as it proceeds to rip your head off. The name really fits their sound and this oozes hysteria. The VOID cover at the end is really good, with top-notch yelping and screaming from the madman on vocals. So







into it! (LA)
(High Fashion Industries)

DISHRAGS – "Three" LP

This is so cool! "It's 1977... Three fifteen year old girls are inspired to start a band." What further incentive do you need! Teenage girls are the way and the truth motherfuckers! Really sick reissue of Canada's first (North America's first?) all female punk band... This is from the first era of the DISHRAGS when they were a three piece, and features their only 7", the track from the *Vancouver Complication* comp, and some really well recorded live stuff. Usually when there's live material on a reissue it's a bad sign, filler ya know, but these tracks are all killer! They pulse with the energy and excitement of a newly discovered idea, total excitement and power, channeling their obvious heroes the RAMONES in a most enticing and frenzied fashion! You can picture the pogo action... Really makes you wish they had recorded an LP. Seriously, the live stuff is almost more exciting to listen to than the songs from the 45. The release looks fantastic too, with a crazy cool fanzine-like booklet full of amazing photos of the band from the era before punk had a uniform, that will make you wanna grab your girls and start a new group immediately... So many sick flyers and artifacts! As previously stated, this is so cool / tough, makes me wanna pile on the eyeliner and pogo my brains out. And furthers my belief that all teenage girls should be issued guitars at age thirteen. (LG)
(Supreme Echo)

DOUBLE ME / LIFES – split EP

DOUBLE ME are an Italian hardcore / fastcore band who rips through some modern fast hardcore. LIFES from Wisconsin have a low-fi, raw bass heavy hardcore/powerviolence sound. Huh, powerviolence without sounding like every other powerviolence band. LIFES is a drum and bass duo who create a lot of noise for being just two people. The two of them have played with SEVEN DAYS OF SAMSARA, GET RAD, and CONQUEST FOR DEATH and the experience shows. Their tracks sound like they were recorded live. (MH)
(Protagonist Music / Good Times / Here and Now)

DRY INSIDES – "Sacrifice" EP

DRY INSIDES is the solo project of one of the coolest artists on the scene right now. However with the help of a backing band you can enjoy them live, which is highly recommended if you get the chance. The vocals have really changed since their split tape with BEHAVIOR, but that's not a bad thing. This EP sounds a lot like RASPBERRY BULBS, which also is not a bad thing. The three songs on this EP fall on the more blackened end of the spectrum of "hardcore" but there is almost a rock and roll type quality to the guitar riffs. If they keep this sound up I'm excited to see what they have in store for us in the future. (KC)
(Failure)

ED SCHRADER'S MUSIC BEAT – "Party Jail" LP

Like LIGHTNING BOLT covering DUB NARCOTIC SOUND SYSTEM, in short ass shaking sounds for worldwide party dogs. I want my bass/drum duos to err on the side of GODHEADSILO and in places this has potential of erring in such a fashion, but the record is called *Party Jail*, and the pop sensibilities soon crush all brutality in a swift and unrelenting fashion. One of the singers sounds like Ren from *Ren and Stimpy,* the other sounds like CALVIN JOHNSON or the dude from the TINDERSTICKS. Are you ready for such antics? I can imagine a giant room full of frantic ragers losing their shit to these sounds, it is party music for party people who dropped out of art school. Join them? Not sure if I wanna but maybe you do! "No Fascination" is my fave number on this disc. (LG)
(Infinity Cat)

ENDORPHINS LOST – EP

Fast and brutal music obscuring the borders between hardcore, metal and grind to give us a ripping example of how this fusion should work. This record won't turn your world upside down, but the grind infused fast core they've pumped out on this EP is worth a spin. The band seems fairly radical, politically, from what I glean but the lyrical content hovers around murder and mutilation. Maybe I'm not thinking hard enough? Either way, a solid release for fans of extreme music. (RM)
(Bad People / Burnt Bridges / Nuclear Ass / What's Left)

ENSLAVE / PAZAHORA – split CD

This split is definitely worth grabbing for expansive hXc heads. Tokyo's ENSLAVE give us four more tracks of epic screamo-crust, and though it's a notch or two below their *Far East Hardcore Punk* LP, they deserve credit for carving out a unique sound somewhere between CATHARSIS, ENVY, and metallic D-beat. The dual vocals are compelling as ever, and the uplifting "Out Of Society" reminds me of PAINTBOX's genre-exploding *Trip, Trance, and Travelling* LP, while the last song unfortunately goes into some pretty campy chug territory. I'd never heard of Singapore's PAZAHORA before this, but wow, totally blown away by their side, a furious, passionate blast of galloping melocrust that actually merits the comparison to ICTUS and FROM ASHES TRAGEDY RISE. The recordings are fuckin' raw in the best way possible, giving the guitars harmonies a nice layer of grit while avoiding the sterile feel that's come to colonize far too much of this style. I'll be digging up their entire discography, thank you very much. (WB)
(MCR)

EUREKA CALIFORNIA – "Crunch" LP

Endlessly interesting Athens, GA has another very worthwhile fuzzy garage pop band to add to their books. This duo has some seriously catchy blood in their side-bobbing hair-flipping skulls. Reminds me of RADIO CONTROL with a hint of surf, or early WEEZER without the creepiness or sweaters. Really groovy guitar work over simple but well-directed drum accompaniment. "Art is Hard" stands out as my favorite track though most of the album stands as quite fun. The batting average for listenable garage-punk here at the compound is well below the Mendoza line but this stands up. (DV)
(HHBTM)

EXCOMUNGADOS – "Expulsos Do Purgatório" CD

First off I gotta give a shoutout to EXCOMUNGADOS for sending in the Comando Rock zine they have an interview in with this release. It came with a free NICKLEBACK poster and that shit looks tight on my wall. EXCOMUNGADOS are from Brazil and it's hard to say what these guys sound like because every song is a little different. One song transitions from grindcore style blast beats to upstroke ska guitar. The next song has that quintessential blues riff (duh duh, dada dada dada) then into street punk style circle pits. They have another song that sounds a lot like CRASS. I don't know man. I can tell you that there seems to be a priest in the band, so yeah, there ya go. (KC)
(Corsário Discos)

EXTERNAL MENACE – "Coalition Blues" LP + EP

Having never secured the a deal with Riot City or Clay or another larger label that would have catapulted them into headliner status, EXTERNAL MENACE are mostly regarded as a bit of a footnote in the story of UK82, which is an absolute shame, as they're easily one of the best punk bands in Scottish history. Hopefully this new collection will get them some of the recognition they so richly deserve. This LP contains 14 tracks of insanely catchy melodic punk culled from the band's two EPs and a number of compilations that in its more tuneful moments owes as much of a debt to the bands of the British Explosion as the punk scene. If "Someday" doesn't have you singing along by the second chorus there's something wrong with your ears. The first 500 copies also include a bonus EP featuring rough-and-ready demo and live tracks, including one previously unreleased song, all of which sound good to great. I do wish there were a bit more information included in the release, at least a brief band bio or something, but that's a minor quibble about an otherwise absolutely brilliant release. (AU)
(Loud Punk)

FARANG – one sided 12"

Absolutely sick! The vocalist has the raddest / toughest voice that makes me think of a combination of AVENGERS, GOOD THROB and FISTICUFFS BLUFF, toughness and frenzy, total hardcore. The music is a similarly tough and frenzied attack, with GINN solos imposed over snarled out but super creative hardcore, giving this the feel that the coolest girl in town pushed ROLLINS off the stage and grabbed the mic. Bear in mind this is not some tame BLACK FLAG reproduction, it makes for a really interesting listen- the songs and songwriting are so cool/wild. I think it's the intensity and GINN guitar style that bring up that reference, but FARANG have a totally distinct creative take on hardcore that is insanely compelling. Bands like this that make mé realize that hardcore will always have a fighting chance despite all its Xerox tendencies. FARANG take elements that others have attempted and failed to reproduce effectively and twists them into a new ideal that makes it clear that personality and creativity go a long way. I think I have listened to this ten times in a row and it doesn't feel like I'm gonna get to the bottom of it. Creepy-crawly rhythms making for a schizophrenic circle pit that only those seeking sounds off the well trodden paths will appreciate… And yet it sounds like they could be insanely popular at the same time. It's not difficult to listen to. A smart and devastating release featuring ex-members of ENDLESS BLOCKADE, KREMLIN, SCHOOL JERKS if you care about such things, and you probably do… You definitely should care about this disc. (LG)
(self-released)

FEMACOFFIN – "Dismal Twilight" EP

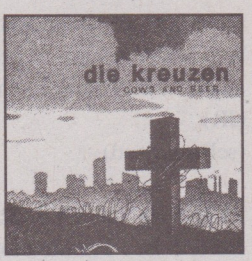
Following their excellently abominable 2013 demo, FEMACOFFIN continue to break new crust ground with anguish, crux and blood-curdling sincerity. What I most appreciate about this band is their no-fucks-given tempo. The overall haplessness of this recording does not give a shit what you or your scene expects from a punk band. There is that kind of awesome respect when you hear FEMACOFFIN live, as well. If I may: hear this risen from the ashes of STORMCROW as AXEWIELD was spewed from EFFIGY. As if either needed be improved upon, yet here they are. Side one dooms the mood with "Dismal Twilight" a four-minute bulldozer. Side two: "Trinity" quickens the pace with additional metal riffs. You can't get much better than the vocal dynamic between Brian and Tony. A ghostly, brief, guitar solo depresses further into their music void of optimism. This is truly saturated, septic crust punk. A spaced-out sample mid-side reminds me of AMEBIX "The Moor," straight into the best ICONS OF FILTH cover ever: "Midnight." Absolutely ripping drum fills here. Holy shit this cover fucking rules! Beautiful stipple artwork by Stiv of VISIONS OF WAR, hand lettered insert, profound lyrics, great production; this is a must have debut EP for any crust resurger out there. (JR)
(Brainsand)

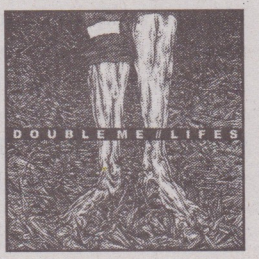
FORCED FEM – "To Turn Against Maker" EP

This Houston band plays mid-tempo guitar driven punk rock'n'roll with one foot in the deathrock pool (do goths bathe? Or is dirt just like a punk thing). Like SPECTRES, but stripped down, dropping all the frills and giving you what you really crave. Drum fills are more punk than post, with heavy vocals delivered in a monotone style. Not totally changing the game in these genres but enjoyable nonetheless. (AP)
(Agrowax)

FRIENDBEAST – "Shadows Across the Desert" EP

To be as clear as they are: FRIENDBEAST are a vegan / animal rights / activist band. Meaning, proceeds go to exactly who they're fighting for. It gets even better; their music is a very interesting combination of anarcho-crust that echoes into post-hardcore soliloquies. ANTISCHISM with a tinge of FOUR HUNDRED YEARS. A clamoring SWING KIDS sound at times, but with the clear messages of ARCHAIC PAX. The songs are easy to get into but the breakdowns are not expected. The end of the first side ends with the powerful pace quickening of "A Life of Rot and Decay." This is everything that made ZERO HOUR so awesome. Passion and clarity. Crazy new styles happening on the second side as if the ALF were a Nintendo game? Like, remember when CONFLICT went into the *A-Team* theme song? Just as serious as that. "Oh my, those cosmetics have done wonders to hide your disgusting mind." This type of unifying sarcasm in punk is no longer embraced as often as it should be, in my experience. FRIENDBEAST





are essentially confident, fun, serious animal activists. You have to give this a listen should any of these traits be important to you also. (JR)
(self-released)

FRIENDS OF CESAR ROMERO – "The Hold/Teisco Telstar Stomp"

I dig me some '60s influenced garage punk. "I like it, Dick. It's got a great beat and the kids can really dance to it." With a driving snare drum and some sort of organ-like thing going on, you can't help but bounce your head to this one. Mid-tempo and catchy, they are two for two on this 7". (KK)
(Snappy Little Numbers)

FUCK YOU PAY ME – LP

Cut-rate shit punk from deep Clevo; I'm still having trouble believing this shares a member with 9 SHOCKS TERROR. Musically, it's just whatever; your standard, run-of-the-mill throwback hardcore, nothing innovative, but at least they play pretty fast and competent. Vocally, however, it's a fucking mess, alternating between ultra-annoying high-pitched shrieks and some more talked-out parts that sound like an ANGRY SAMOANS knockoff. A glance at the lyrics and liner notes quickly took this from "boring" to "no, I actually hate this," a thin veneer of bravado masking an obvious chip on their collective shoulder about not being accepted by "self-entitled arrogant PUSSIES" such as myself. Punk scene Illuminati or not, this band will probably playing Now That's Class until the end of time… party on, brodozers. (WB)
(Schizophrenic)

FUTURE VIRGINS – "Late Republic/ Centre"

On this two-song banger from FUTURE VIRGINS, they offer little-to-no information on where their sounds came from. You just have to rely on the music itself… the way it should be. On the A-side, they slow it down a little (for them) and turn more towards power-pop than punk. Their singer, Ashley, has a fucking knack of turning out an incredibly catchy chorus and he doesn't fail here. My only complaint is that the song ends before it feels like it's even begun. It's abrupt, but maybe that's for the best. No extraneous bullshit. Concise. The flip side is a faster, mid-tempo rager that feels reminiscent of their earlier, ragged EPs, but is tempered by years of experience. In short, fans of this band will not be disappointed in the slightest. If you're a fan of good, concise, power-pop flavored punk that pays attention to the little details, you'll wanna pick this up. (GH)
(self-released)

GAY PANIC – "Wrong Feelings" CD

I was writing for *Punk Planet* right before its demise and it really seemed like they reviewed absolutely everything that crossed their doorstep. I remember getting a horrid CD of some fucking terrible adult contemporary type bullshit, with a KENNY G style saxophone, and fuck I was just like why the fuck am I reviewing this. This is like a cross between SCISSOR SISTERS and TEGAN AND SARA with the tiniest dash of the mundane aspects of JOY DIVISION (hold on, I take back the JOY DIVISION part). Just like adults making adult music (this is a dis), the kind of thing where I bet their fans are the type of music fans who say stuff like, "they're really talented musicians." And man I do not give a fuck about talent, being highly competent at playing an instrument being the focus of what you do is ultra boring. I'd rather listen to Pip farting on a snare drum. (MM)
(self-released)

GOOSEBUMPS – "Scared to See A Doctor" EP

Yet another sick release out of NYC. GOOSEBUMPS really stepped it up on this record, and the sound on this really works for them. These songs sound like FLIPPER playing hardcore or something along those lines; really noise rocky guitar, all the songs are pretty slow tempo. There's not too much else to say about this one, the songs are sick, the artwork is sick, even the record title is sick. I mean I fucking hate going to the doctor. I think if you feel like you need to go to the doctor, put this record on and if you feel as fucked up as these songs sound then you should probably go. Otherwise just stay home and enjoy. (KC)
(Katorga Works)

GRACE WILL FALL – "No Rush" CD

These Swedish rager's play a brand of hardcore that is getting more and more familiar and visible to those outside the punk community. They give us fast, ripping, screaming tracks countered by melodic and slick song elements that are highlighted by high production value. This kinda veers the music from menacing to *party!* without sacrificing that edginess. The music is jammed with frantic guitars and screamed vocals that are layered with complex song arrangements and peppered with melodic sing-a-longs, tambourines and studio effects. Start to finish this is a decedent record, probably a gateway album for many young fans not unlike the Fat Wreck Chord catalogue which GRACE WILL FALL would fit nicely onto. (RM)
(Hobo / MidSummer)

GRMMSK / MÜLLTÜTE – collaboration split EP

To avoid confusion I should have called this a split, but it isn't. It is, however, the coolest thing to pass my ears this month. Berlin's MÜLLTÜTE are given the business by Finnish act GRMMSK, resulting in a total mind fuck that barely treads water and pushes not just the boundaries of what is punk, but what is music. Damaged dub and industrial noise reinterpretations of a killer hardcore band is something I can absolutely get behind. (WN)
(self-released)

GUIDE – "Some Things Must Be Endured" EP

European hardcore sound from the '90s, but straight outta Nashville today. And by "European hardcore" I mean raw, real, no-frills grindcore. Strangled vocals and some blast beats kick it off into killer D-beat. I love the utter hatred in this recording! Crucial powerviolence blasts such as HOLY MOUNTAIN, ACRID, RORSCHACH, MIND ERASER. The vocalist has excellent range from guttural growls to coarse embittered howls. Such eloquently composed lyrics that when read they evoke the light emotions of haiku. But the tunes… They are much, much heavier. Beautiful "flash tattoo" style artwork and packaging. (JR)
(Burnt Bridges)

GUILT PARTY – "Clergy of Disgust" EP

Under-produced, raw and fresh as fuck punk that reminds me of an obscure Floridian band from the mid-'80s on the A-side, which features material from this Houston band's first cassette. The B-side is material from another cassette, and this material is more filled-out, perhaps due to the vocals being at the front of the mix, instead of embedded within as they are on the other side. The song writing is also slightly different on each side as well. They seem to take their time with the B-side material, where as the A-side seems angsty and more adolescent (in a good way, of course). The two tapes this record is comprised

of were both released in the first half of 2012, followed by the disbandment of this group. (KR)
(Agrowax)

HEARTBURNS – "Cold Hell Below" EP

Upbeat, energetic melodic punk from Finland. They remind me a lot of OFF WITH THEIR HEADS: tuneful and catchy but with a thick guitar tone and a guttural, cheap beer and cigs vocal drawl. They would go down well with the Gainesville fest crowd, but I'd also recommend them to fans of more rock'n'roll tinged punk like ZEKE. (AM)
(Combat Rock Industry)

HOBOCOP – "Half Man Half Cop" 10"

This is some catchy, distorted, dance-y garage pop. Eleven short blasts of crazed sounds. What fun! "Ponzi Scheme" is the catchiest, coolest song on this 10", but the others are right behind it. Plus how could I not be a fan of someone named LONG JOHN HOBOCOP? (CK)
(Slovenly)

INSTITUTE – "Demo" 12"

If reading about a band pressing their demo onto vinyl in 2014, (originally released on cassette and available to stream for free as well as for purchase electronically on the internet), doesn't make you at least stop for a second and wonder about the purpose of prestige formats in the modern age, perhaps we're going to have trouble discoursing about this record. But first, the music: INSTITUTE plays bleak, mopey punk with lots of BAUHAUS. To give it a little snap, every now and then they throw in a little GANG OF FOUR crackle to the arrangements, with relentless high hats and a martial rhythm section. There're also lilts and hints of pop haunting (get it?) the songs. The vocals are monotone, and have an effective bummer vibe. It's all reasonably well presented, and for demo tracks they sound pretty good. The lyrics abound, near as I can tell, with the standard topics, but don't sound overtly rote or pedantic. Now, I know that a lot of you live and die by your vinyl, the prestige format. Many of you also stay true to your cassette tapes, the trash prestige format. I've neither the time nor the space to call into question the import and meaning of such allegiances to trinkets, but when such material has already been released and is available for free on the band's easily accessed web site, I wonder if such a kush vinyl release is really necessary, except as a marketing maneuver. (LP)
(Deranged)

JACK – "Éberkóma" EP

Grindcore with touches of death metal from Hungary. The guitar riffs are the highlight with some very heavy memorable moments. They seem to do everything right in their songs. Slow grinding parts, guitar solos in the right place, speedy at times and just enough straight forward grind. "Destined to Rot" is a good example, sample intro, into a mid-paced old school sound like, say EXTREME NOISE TERROR and then they rip into fast grindcore, not unlike PHOBIA. This isn't over-produced or techie grind, it's got all the rawness of early grind with touches of death metal. (MH)
(Give Praise)

JARHEAD FERTILIZER / PURGE – "Always Faithful" split EP

This is my introduction to both bands, and I'm suitable impressed. JARHEAD FERTILIZER is grind with vocals pushed to the absolute brink, but driven by guitars bent on ethereal pulverizations more than brainless shred. Four tracks and I wanted more. PURGE are more traditional, but no less devastating; burly, angular grind with filthy breakdowns. This will melt your face… that's what you want, right? (WN)
(Cricket Cemetery)

KAPYKAARTI – "Elamantehtava" EP

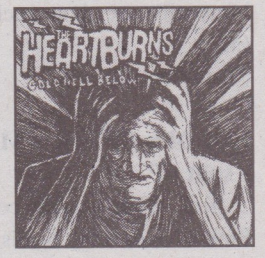
Fast 1980 style Finnish punk. Not hardcore but hard. Socially conscious lyrics about corporate greed, the evils of mining and more. There's helpful translations of every song for ignorant Americans like myself. Rusty sharpened axe guitars and a perfect vermin chewing singer for this style of punk. A couple of these songs would fit perfectly on the *P.E.A.C.E.* comp from way back. Huff some Aqua Net and pogo. (RO)
(Sarasteen Pienmuovi)

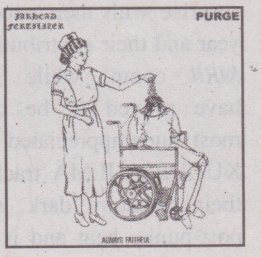
THE KENDOLLS – "Diablo Gringo" CD

Screaming nu-style-core perfect for a raging outdoor fest. Drawing influences from pop contemporaries so there is something for everyone. The vocals take it easy at times for the less hardcore set and they pull off the mainstream atmospheric lead guitar hooks very well. I'm thinking of MUSE as comparison? I can't be sure. Screamy and catchy. Track three is their real mosher, trading off vocals, a little more punk on this one, and some more QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE moments. Last track has my favorite part, the totally doomy breakdown, but when the singer goes "*woo*!" right in the middle of it… I just cannot relate to that sentiment at all. (JR)
(Alleycat)

KILJUVELKA-70 – "Tottele!" EP

Punchy bare knuckled hardcore from Finland driven by forceful commanding vocals. The six tracks here on KILJUVELKA-70's debut vinyl release (following two CD demos), push forward with simple but succinct impact… Until their metal leanings and musical chops detour like a late '90s SLAYER record into a metallic funk-groove, the guitar solos start to slide a little too wanky and the songs themselves begin to swirl into a complexity that never balances in the same strength as their straight forward attack. The recording is clear





and solid, but somewhat neutral in conveying the band's heavier leanings or their basic, raw attack—but like the songs themselves, it is strong enough that these minor quibbles shouldn't hold back any diehard fans of burly later '80s Finnish hardcore à la later TERVEET KÄDET recordings. Cover features basic scrawls of the all-Finnish lyrics, skulls and doomed parishioners. (KS)
(Ramekuukkeli)

KOHTI TUHOA – "Kujanjuoksu" EP

A whirlwind of bombastic crust/HC from Finland with a massive mess of sound aimed straight at your face. This sounds like its sweaty, smelly and maximum stenchcore tinged energy—female vocals snarl more than scream and the guitars are perfectly tweaked and damaged. Six tracks, a huge wall of terror. Awesome. (WN)
(Svart)

KNÆGT / SLÖA KNIVAR – split EP

KNÆGT got me amped right out of the gate! Hailing from Malmö, they're not too far off from town-mates SKITKIDS (or remember that Canadian band S.T.R.E.E.T.S.?) in pure relentless riffing and energy. Two tracks of memorable galloping, riffy, rambunctious hardcore with awesome bass licks. You'd have to hate fun to not enjoy this. After seeing lots of excitable live photos of SLÖA KNIVAR on the internet over the past couple years, I'm finally getting around to hearing their rendition of powerful and driving hardcore punk. Patricia's vocals are gritty and convincing, and add the snot that carves their sound out of an otherwise potentially generic trap. One fast song and one slow burner from them. Thank you for the English song explanations—some of us still care about such things! Great split! (MA)
(Sista Versen)

KUUDES SILMÄ / MAAILMANLOPPU – split EP

Yes! What a great collaboration! Two of Finland's darkest bands right now, sharing members and offering two songs apiece. KUUDES SILMÄ kind of took us all by surprise with their excellent full-length last year and their contribution to the most recent *MRR* comp, while MAAILMANLOPPU have proved to be one of the region's most underappreciated bands yet. The first KUUDES SILMÄ track "Tauti Leviää" has their signature dark, synthy, melodic and post-punky beat and is their standout track. On the MAAILMANLOPPU side, the tempo tightens (but only just), the synths are dropped and the vocals and melodic harmonies still soar through the punchy, plucking bass and firm drumming. All four songs on this EP go over the couple-minute mark, which might not grab punk fans with short attention spans, but if you like to be taken on a journey, or like that added dose of sophistication to your punk, give this a try. (LA)
(Combat Rock Industry)

THE KURWS – "Hole In The Ghetto" LP

This Polish group plays discordant, mainly instrumental noise punk that takes stylistic cues from the EX, DOG FACED HERMANS, DAWSON, CAPTAIN BEEFHEART AND THE MAGIC BAND, even NOMEANSNO at times. I know it sucks to just throw out a list of names, but if you catch what I'm laying down it should give you an idea of what you're in for here. Not to mention that those are some of my all time favorite bands, so those aren't references I just toss around lightly. There's a saxophone that can add a free jazz tone to things at times. You could be forgiven for thinking this was improvised (and parts of it might be) but the careful listener will discern a semblance of structure and precise stops, starts, and diversions. There is a lot of music that sounds more fun to play than it is to listen to, but luckily I think the KURWS are probably having a lot of fun playing this stuff, *and* it's fun to listen to. This is not the kind of thing that often makes its way past the *MRR* review junta so it's a welcome listen. (AM)
(Batshit)

LEXICON DEVILS – "Vegetative State" EP

Named after a great GERMS song? This band is a far cry from that sound. Fast tight energetic hardcore that could use some heroin. Maybe that sounds awful, but they're so tight that it's a little dull. The guitars wank at all the right times, the drums come in flawlessly, and the bass intros and musical breakdowns are done impeccably. A nondescript singer completes the package. This is probably a piss poor complaint, but I desire a little slop and looseness in my hardcore. That's just me. You may like it just fine. They probably have nice shoes. (RO)
(Agrowax)

LIFES / SHORT WALK – split EP

SHORT WALK makes pretty good power-violence with a lotta dense sound. They sound primarily influenced by NO COMMENT and have a similar no frills approach. It doesn't have an immediate impact, though it did sound better on second listen. LIFES, other than having a super unoriginal name, also waste zero time in assaulting your ears with their big bassy, at times off-kilter, hyper sprints of power-violence. I think their side stands out, as it's more odd and claustrophobic. Though, neither band is super exciting but I'd put 'em both under the "probably better live" area. (JD)
(Hygiene)

LOS PEPES – "Tonight" EP

Wow. This is great. I am surprised! Killer *suuuuper* punky power pop from, yes, some *new* band. I was fooled, other than this sounds hella tough compared to the too sugary OG '80s stuff. Great punk rock, apparently from the UK; four tracks, not a sleeper amongst 'em. Great! This copy is on maroon vinyl. (GB)
(Wanda)

LOW LIFE – "Dogging" LP

Doomed sound of fractured minds, focusing on the seamier underside of human undertakings with scrapings of post-punk dissolution; Industrial Records via a sorta goth-ed out DRUNKS WITH GUNS, with I think the grim sound of a fuckin' flange involved somehow? I think there's a TUBEWAY ARMY cover too?! Going nowhere as fast as possible, total disarray in lyrical and musical form with ruminations on the pleasures found in falling apart. This is aggressive and sardonic, and while usually listening to someone's drug stories is as interesting as listening to their dreams, LOW LIFE somehow transcend this. A depiction of the mundane realities of this grubby existence, with depictions of enforced masculinity, drug fueled rampages, tacky fantasies, falling apart, always joking and relentlessly mocking everything. This is a fantastic record, a total and compelling listen and one of the few groups mining this seam of post-punk darkness that is worth the cost of admission. (LG)
(RIP Society / Disinfect)

MANBEAST – "Sore" EP

When I first got this record I thought they were called "Manbeast Sore," which I thought was sick. Fourteen songs on one seven inch so you know it's fast. But it's not non-stop grind your face off fast; there are definitely some sick fucking bedroom mosh worthy parts. This record shifts seamlessly between

straightforward powerviolence, double bass beat down breakdowns and even some youth crew hardcore parts. The vocals are also much better than your average run of the mill powerviolence cookie monster vocals. The worst part about this record is the pixilated insert, seriously it's so bad you can't read any of the lyrics, but then again who reads lyrics when they're moshing? (KC)
(Discontent / Vwyrd Wurd)

MISSIONARY – "American Strike" EP

Straight outta 538 Johnson come MISSIONARY, who are raising an already high bar for bands that have come out of said Bushwick punk complex. The UK-via-Boston-Crew sounds of bands like CREEM are a continuing theme on this record, along with a hint of both EP and LP POISON IDEA as well as ANTIDOTE. What sets MISSIONARY apart are both the hooks and attention to every detail of songwriting that makes each of these six songs so memorable. "Cop Disease" straight up sounds like an updated version of the DISCHARGE singles, "Double Vision" and "Escape" sound like SSD meets ANTIDOTE, and the A-side's opener and closer are both mid-to-slow-paced moshers, and all of them are sick. The recording fits the style perfectly, and every instrument makes it mark on this record, the bouncy bass especially. (DG)
(Warthog Speak)

MORDECAI – "Neil's Generator" LP

Hmmm, wasn't really expecting smarmy jangle pop outta this, though with a name like MORDECAI, I'm not sure what I would expect. Shit is hella hard to place, while I'm trying to figure it out they get mega extra bonus points for a Neil Young inspired one-note guitar shred. DIY for sure. Ahh wait. That's it! The WEDDING PRESENT. But kinda fucked *'Mer'can* WEDDING PRESENT if you catch my drift. Rad stuff, way too much to digest, will need to keep coming back to absorb it all. Keep it up!! (GB)
(Richie)

MOSTLY DEAD – "The Day They Turned Us All Into Slaves" EP

The MOSTLY DEAD play an up tempo style of melodic punk that is heavily influenced by pre-major label (post-hardcore era) BAD RELIGION. The Epitaph charm resonates throughout this six-song, politically conscious EP with feisty anthems, tight production and catchy tunes to do some justice to their chosen brand of punk. It looks like this is an older release, from 2010 and they have new, more developed material out now. This release is definitely not essential, but not a bad pick up if you're interested. (RM)
(self-released)

THE MOSTLY DEAD – "Wilderness" CD

This four piece from DC is kinda all over the place. Mostly, though, it's just bro-hardcore mixed with metal to the point of reminding me of RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE, which is unfortunate, as I am certain that is not the direction they are trying to go in. Very slickly produced, heavy, and spacey at times. Not my thing. PS, there's no info about the record label, but it looks like the serial code was applied with scotch tape. (DZ)
(self-released)

MR. AND THE MRS. – "A Tale of Two Eyes" lathecut EP

Wow, they made a whopping 20 copies of this lathe 7" EP. Chances are at least 31% of the pressing's owners will be semi-stoked on the offerings of MR. AND THE MRS., but beyond the scarcity and handmade shit associated with this, there really isn't much to get excited about here. The simple skuzzy punk heard on these four tunes is in fact aided by the sonic constraints of the format, which only means the songs, simplistic and shitty as they are, don't really shine through the shit-fi sheen. Oh well. (MC)
(Funky Frankenstein)

NERVOUS SYSTEM – "Slabor Life" EP

Yet another punk'd out EP with hardcore moments. The singer sounds like he snorted the ashes of DARBY through one nostril and the dirt off some filthy skater kid's shoes through the other nostril. Overall, the record has decent hooks that move this record away from falling in the realm of generic, it's pretty cool. (MS)
(Paha Tukka Elama)

NEUTRON RATS – "Bomb Worship" EP

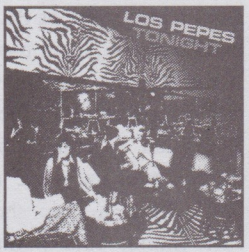
Straightforward, speedy metallic D-beat punk that makes up in aggression what it lacks in memorable hooks. Maybe it's because I was just looking at Lydia's rad WARCRY shirt, but I can definitely draw a parallel between that band and these guys, though NEUTRON RATS throw a little more fuzz into the sound and a bit more gallop into the riffs. The recording is fantastic, booming and echo-y in a way that lends an air of desolation to the proceedings and really captures a live feel. My mind is definitely not blown, but it is a sold EP for the black denim and studs set and it left me feeling like I'd like to see them in person, which is always a good thing. (AU)
(Loud Punk)

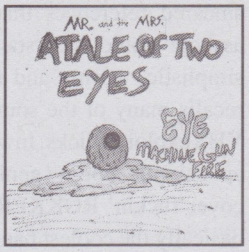
NIE-ZETT – CD

Sorta wretched grunge meets TURBO NEGRO group from Japan. Incredibly well produced, sounds like something that would be used at a rodeo or televised car race. Propulsive rock'n'roll for leather jacket wearin' rocker types. There's even a bass solo. (LG)
(self-released)

NIGHT BIRDS – "Monster Surf" EP

NIGHT BIRDS already have surfy tendencies for a punk band, not unlike AGENT ORANGE or the guitar





work of DEAD KENNEDYS, but on this little slab it seems like they ditched their punk vocals in exchange for a synth and scant horns for a more "traditional" surf sound. Like maybe a MAN OR ASTROMAN? without the schtick. I've always hated surf bands, and I think it's been because of the schtick. Hey, we're Mexican wrestlers! Hey, we're robots! Hey, we're goofy doctors! Can't you just be a band that plays good surf music? Apparently, yes, you can. This is great. I feel like a dink for not catching them for free a few months ago, now. (DZ)
(Wallride)

NIHILIST CUNT – "Everything Falls Apart" EP

Aggressive and snotty Bay Area hardcore. It's perhaps more sing song-y than your modern day fast HC fan would like, but the snarl reminds me of BLACK FORK and this band's geographical roots are apparent (even if the sound is accidental). I think they are talkin' politics with the anti-religious "Blah Blah Blah" (second accidental HÜSKER DÜ reference in the same record) and "GMO," but without a lyric sheet I can't really be sure (minus four points). I confess that I was decidedly underwhelmed by this band's first EP, but this one is a huge improvement. Meaty, feisty, punk as shit. (WN)
(Suburban White Trash)

NO BAILS – "Epyx Shredder" LP

Skate-obsessed adult infants from Michigan unleash an LP that basically obliterates their single, a record that won over many morons a few years back (myself included). This 'un will at least double their following, so squares beware. *Epyx Shredder* is a stew of resin-smeared references that only a 36-year-old asshole would understand, splooged out over simplistic, wormy and tough punk rock that recalls many of the soundtracks to your fave VHS exploito-flicks. In addition to NO BAILS' apocalyptic moron / genius originals, they also cover fuckin' ROKKER, which makes them basically the coolest band currently inhabiting our solar system. Fuckin' A. You need to take all your change to Coinstar and send some goddamn money to Pelican Pow Wow HQ now. Fuckin' great record here, folks. (MC)
(Pelican Pow Wow)

NO COAST – "Don't Be a Gramps/Kick Out the Hamms"

I used to be a fan of Record Store Day. It's become way too commercialized now, with every band and their brother putting out "RSD Exclusives," including this one. NO COAST deliver a sort of indie pop version of punk rock. This is the kind of thing that at one time really was considered punk. Nowadays, most folks would dismiss this as not loud enough, not fast enough, not angry enough. Me? I like a good rock band and this one definitely qualifies. Punk is more than a sound; it's an attitude. Sure, it's kind of soft and kind of pretty and it's on powder blue vinyl, but don't get so caught up in labeling things. Oh, and it kind of reminds me of a single that MERCYLAND put out years and years ago. (KK)
(Glory Hole)

NOMADS – "Holocaust Wall" EP

Ugly pummeling Scandi-style D-beat from LA. There are movie samples galore that actually add very successfully to the aggression. Harsh vocals with some sung intonation all the while gargling fucking guts. This EP is the sound of exploding squad cars. All members of NOMADS *own* on their instruments, and the recording is outstanding. There's an anthemic mid-tempo cover of DRILLER KILLER's *From Out of Nowhere* and I have the maniacal image of a charged, studded stampede trampling cop skulls like gingerbread houses when I hear it. This is like the scene in *Rock'n'Roll High School* when they drive into town, except at three times the speed, and on wild boars. Side two kills it with rocking crust metal vomit. Gritty like NUCLEAR DEATH TERROR, inky like GURKHA. Followed by the real pit churner "White Night" which goes on forever, only to make me put it on again. If NOMADS head up to the Bay, I'm there. Venomous vipers, this is the EP for you. (JR)
(H1N1)

NO PROBLEM – "Already Dead" LP

Snotty, catchy and totally fucking raging, NO PROBLEM is a band that really brings it with energy, live and on record. This band is infectiously pleasing to the punk ear, and on this record they make it clear they have mastered many styles of song writing and playing. While I would say their usual sound is geared more toward something along the lines of DOA, *Already Dead* gives us an impression these dudes could play any song from any sub-genre of punk and make it their own. With powerful singing vocals and darker elements, *Different Shades of Grey* is an eerie, WIPERS-esque closing to the A-side, and takes us from their ultra snotty, mid-'00s hardcore material, to the B-side of much more melodic, but still powerful songs. If you ever have an opportunity to see this band live, I strongly encourage you to do so. It will be worth it. (KR)
(Deranged)

OLD MAN STRENGTH – "Woke Up Swinging" EP

What I initially thought might be some lame ageist joke actually ends up being a kind of funny self-depreciating joke. OLD MAN STRENGTH is a band of older punks playing hardcore as they say "with old man anger". There aren't any lyrics about "getting off my lawn" or that stuff. It is more middle-age resignation. We work day jobs and we play music. I can relate. OMS plays melodic hardcore with a metallic edge. The singer has a deep voice and speak-sings his lyrics. Maybe not the coolest band on the block, but I appreciate what they're doing. (CK)
(Pankratium)

PINPRICK PUNISHMENT – "A Tall Baby" EP

Weird and angular Japanese noise rock heavy on the psychedelic end of the spectrum. The flip side is (only slightly) more aggressive and straight forward, but this is one that needs to be carefully digested so you don't gloss over the nuance with a wave of your hand and a "this doesn't just...*rock*," because it does rock. A lot. File in the same category and FUTURES or IDOL PUNCH, though I find PINPRICK PUNISHMENT more cerebral and less in your face. (WN)
(Black Cube)

PITY – "The Struggle" EP

Great garage punk—played by folks with hardcore roots, if the final song is any indication. It's heavy and stomping, and the simple, subdued riffs give the record less of a melodic feel than other similar ones, which gives it a refreshing character. The singer has a scummy croon (definitely in a good way), that's also relatively monotone, except for a few points when he lets some notes shine through. The lyrics are sometimes irreverent and sometimes serious, but a cut above the rest in both cases, and I wish this record came with a lyric sheet. (DG)
(self-released)

THE PNEUMONIAS – "Still Lurkin" 10"

Haven't heard much from this outfit in

recent years, but they made a few ripples with anyone who followed the explosion of (mostly mediocre) Euro bands aping the sound and aesthetic of Rip Off Records and that ilk. Things haven't progressed at all with the PNEUMONIAS, which has to be by design as it's clear where their loyalties lie. Short, snotty punk stuff, covers of both the SWINDLERS and LOLI AND THE CHONES, both as good a name-check reference as could likely be applied here. Boring, but not without its moments. (MC)
(Frantic City / Juvenile Delinquent)

PRIMA DONNA – "Living in Sin/Rubbish"

I've had some pretty good luck with Wanda Records and this one continues that streak. While the tempo is a bit slow on the A-side, it's got this great catchy lead guitar that really brings it along. On the B-side, they definitely pick up the pace and introduce a little keyboard action, and even some saxophone, in a sort of EDDIE AND THE HOT RODS rocknroll number. It actually sounds like it could be a cover, but it's an original. Think Chiswick Records circa 1977. The combo black/red vinyl is just icing on the cake. (KK)
(Wanda)

PRIMITIVE PACT – "Injustice" EP

First thing I notice on this UK82-punk-worhip slab is the rich chorus-pedal-y guitars, with the knobs presumably turned all the way to the right. Each side contains one mid tempo track and one at "pogo speed." The arrangements are a bit repetitive in the way that some of those old UK82 EPs are, which is not necessarily a bad thing when you consider the potential for dancing. There aren't any huge hooks to grab me for life here, but it's still good. Wouldn't sound outta place amongst a stack of EPs including AD NAUSEAM, ULTRA VIOLENT, and ACTIVES. (MA)
(Nightrider / Total Fucker)

PROXY – "Fine Wine/Undone"

Canada's PROXY drop another two tightly performed tracks of mid-tempo, gritty rock'n'rolling bass-laden punk. This one continues down MOTÖRHEAD Highway at 80 mph with THIN LIZZY blasting from the tape deck, with fiery solos, riffage that briefly take me back to the NWOBHM, thundering bass that never loosens up and those signature gruff vocals that I just can't resist. There are deep and dual harmonies on guitar, a nice full production where all the instruments engage and deliver, and that refreshing soulful groove and streetwise swagger that PROXY have managed to bring to all their releases since day one. Yet it's the ingrained glumness, reminiscent of UK82 punk or '80s French Oi! (or any band influenced by BLITZ for that matter) that actually wins me over every time and is what gives these tracks that extra sway that other acts like this lack. These 300 hand-stamped, fine-wine-stained 7"s, pressed for their recent West Coast tour ending at the Burnouts in Baja in Tijuana, are probably sold out by now, so I'm grateful for my reviewer copy. (LA)
(MMM Discos)

PUOLAN LAKOT – CD

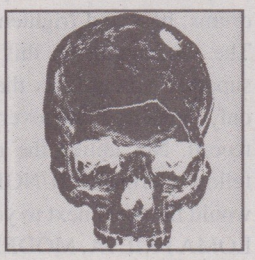
Finnish Oi! with RAMONES guitar. No English lyrics so they could be singing about immigrant bashing or national pride for all I know. Maybe it's just about football, working and the pub? Perhaps they're singing about deep inner emotions, a need to be loved and transgender rights? Dunno. There's a horn section on some tracks that's really unfortunate, but for the most part they're alright. The singer sounds like he leaves copious amounts of spit on the mike. Track seven has the most hilarious EDDIE MONEY '80s horns on it, but is quite a catchy tune. Cheers, kippis or whatever. (RO)
(Step Backwards)

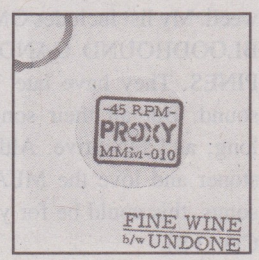
RAD PAYOFF – "The Good, the Rad and the Ugly" LP

Midwestern, self-described "stoner punks." You might guess that fact with song titles like "New Bong Turks" and "The Bong Remains the Same," as well as goofy lines like "Don't slam my dick in the car door." Super catchy vocals reminiscent of early ROLLINS BAND, GLUECIFER and FUCKED UP (sans their current penchant for dopey SPRINGSTEEN-isms). Though song structure-wise, it's closer to a less funky VICTIM'S FAMILY, as they move around a lot. The latter reference comes in a ton on "Can't Stand Up." Altogether pretty neat stuff which seems like it might come over even better live. Bonus for the partying luchadores on the cover. (JD)
(Let's Pretend)

RAW POWER – "Tired and Furious" CD

Maybe this disc wouldn't garner a second listen if it were not from RAW POWER, but the fact is that it is from RAW POWER…and so I listen with slightly more interest and scrutiny than a slick crossover/melodic punk CD would otherwise warrant. The guitars stopped being punk in this band more than a decade ago, but they are venturing back on *Tired and Furious*, but they are closer to NOFX (shit man, "Time to Remember" sounds like LEATHERFACE with crew backing vocals) than hardcore. The production is thick and professional (which probably has as much to do with my "melodic punk" quip as the riffs themselves), but Mauro's vocals are visceral as ever to still give the recording an edge. However, there's this: *you're nothing but a cheap piece of meat/what you do here you should do on the street/you chose the easy way to lie on your back/giving yourself away to get a fat check* (from "Bitch") and a few other quips that either make me shake my head at the stupidity or throw up in my mouth. The title suggests the vibe of the whole recording: melody (and gratuitous screaming cock rock solos) aside, the record does indeed sound





furious…but it also sounds tired. (WN)
(Beer City)

REBARKER – 12"

This is a fucking fantastic record. From the first notes of the intro to the bitter pleas for a friend's sober life on the records last song, the intensity does not stop. Track after track continues the barrage of weight and power being forced upon you via guitar, drums, bass and frighteningly honest vocals. The sequencing on this one sided 12" was superbly arranged as the flow of the album only enhances the overall authority of the record. Not unlike the recent releases from fellow German's JUNGBLUTH, this record would fit nicely next to your BURIAL YEAR, LOMA PRIETA, MODERN LIFE IS WAR or CHOKEHOLD LPs. (RM)
(Phantom / Skull Cave)

THE RIVALS – "Future Rights/Flowers"

Another label jumps feet first into the reissue game, putting out the two long-gone singles from Kent's the RIVALS. This one is their 1979 debut that first put them on the map, and it's a two-track scorcher. Take a punk, a skin, and an 'erbert and put them in the studio and if you're lucky they'll crank out something mid-paced and menacing, not unlike the PISTOLS, but with a less mannered, more direct vocal approach. Their second single, a THEM cover, apparently received more attention and airplay, but this is the real first wave suburban punk deal. (AM)
(Breakout)

ROYAL PINES – "Three Sheets" LP

There are certain bands that I can't relate to simply because I don't smoke enough weed. My list includes OM, JESUS LIZARD, BLOODHOUND GAND and now ROYAL PINES. They have late '80s Seattle grunge sound. But all their songs are pretty slow, long, and repetitive. Although if you are a stoner and love the MEAT PUPPETS' slow songs, this could be for you. It comes with a CD. (FS)
(self-released)

RÜZ – "Drug Cult" flexi EP

An absolute rager. This record combines a lot of what I like about 2002-2003 earnest fast hardcore with the abrasion, attitude, and artwork (and unintended alliteration) that one would expect from this being associated with LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS. Maybe somewhere between the first CAREER SUICIDE EP and the GATE CRASHERS LP, if that means anything to anyone. This flexi is frantic: the songs are constantly twisting and turning, the riffing is often frenzied despite the frequent unexpected breakdowns, but through it all, what the drummer is doing at any given time complements the music really well. The high-pitched vocals sometimes push into shrieking territory, but are railing against ills that deserve to get railed against. And judging from the picture of the deranged vocalist with eyes bulging out sporting a Hawaiian shirt, I imagine this band goes apeshit live. (DG)
(Lumpy)

THEE SAMEDI – "TV Evangelist" EP

Sinister punk thrown into a schism, harkening back to agonized and pissed predecessors ANTIOCH ARROW and the BIRTHDAY PARTY. This record could've come out of San Diego in 1993 but it's actually out of Bellevue, Washington put out by this project that's both a label and all ages venue. Aggressive and raw—a total jammer. (AP)
(Forbidden Seabass)

SCARECROW – "Amores De Vampiros" EP

Finnish horror punk. SCARECROW combines a handful of ideas including punk'n'roll, tiny bits of metal, small amounts of keyboards and straight up horror punk. They accomplish this without sounding like a MISFITS knockoff. Some gruff understandable vocals sing about being a "Son of Satan," and there's a catchy, almost drinking, punk song, "Jesus, Lucifer and Me." "Metal Scum" appears to be a nod of appreciation for metal heads. A slightly heavier, almost metal sound with a nice gallop and big double-bass drums make this a downright anthem. And at one point it's damn near death metal. "Metal scum / Not fear the death / Hellfire inside the head." (MH)
(82)

SCHOOL SHOOTINGS – LP

The eternal sound of rage in the rec room; American hardcore as a folk idiom, fast and fervent, offering up a snapshot of culture in the everything is available instantly age of the internet. Taking hits from DEADLINE to the F.U.'S, whilst adding the considered aesthetic take of post Youth Attack HC and maybe also the fevered yowl of San Diego circa 1992. This LP represents a timeline of possibilities through infinite regression, male youth out for something amongst the rubble of former industrial powerhouse cityscapes. This is generic and yet it's not boring; the lyrics are defeated and disillusioned depictions of modern life in the shitty sprawl of American existence. Shortest song is fifteen seconds, longest clocks in at over four minutes. Make of that what you will. (LG)
(Casual Punks)

SCREAMING SNEAKERS – "Marching Orders" EP

Oh Jesus! The first song "Violent Days" alone is worth the price of admission on the bootleg reissue of this 1982 record. It's a bouncy, dark, beautiful, classic-sounding punk song with strong, confident female vocals from a band who never got the recognition they (debatably) deserved. The second song, "Grin and Bear" slows it down a little, and has a little bit of a new-wave / goth influence. Unfortunately, the second side feels like the band is turning towards a radio pop angle. The songs are still good and strong, but it feels like their sound is influenced by a sense of "trying to make it." It's not bad, but it's not terribly exciting. "I Can't Help It" is catchy, but ultimately sounds like radio fluff. "Reflections" is also catchy, but just drags on for too long. Still, if I saw this in a store, I'd buy it and wear out the grooves on side A. (GH)
(bootleg, no info)

THE SCUTCHES / SHOCKTROOPERS – split EP

I was expecting Oi! with a name like SHOCKTROOPERS but instead they're rockin' rolling poppy punk. Reminiscent of TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET or the MUFFS. *Longue Eyeland's* the SCUTCHES play dreamy pop punk with hand claps and shit like the mellow QUEERS songs combined with JESUS AND MARY CHAIN but not that exciting at all. Way too bubblelicious for me. (RO)
(Tranquilo)

SELF ABUSE – "Teenage" LP

Loud Punk has unearthed this slab of second wave punk excellence. Originally released as a cassette in 1983, this twelve track album is a masterpiece of tatty seaside town suburban punk angst. In the face of the fashion of the era for more and more speed and distortion, SELF ABUSE hold back to let the melody shine through just a little. The vocals are what sets SELF ABUSE apart from thousands of other Xerox punk demos that surfaced in

the early '80s; part Steve Drewitt from NEWTOWN NEUROTICS and part Ben from THATCHER ON ACID, I had to do a bit of googling (oo er!) because the singer sounded so familiar I was *sure* I'd heard him before, but I don't think I have. Overall, great stuff and hats off to the archeologists at Loud Punk. (AM)
(Loud Punk)

SHINY BROWN – "Strawberries" EP

Arty, amped hardcore from Germany; seven strong tracks of hyper blasting with yelped, raw higher pitched vocals over quick runs of snare-drum driven thrash. There's a loose, live in the studio feel with an open drum sound (à la UNIVERSAL ORDER OF ARMAGEDDON) that provides a lot of the songs punctuation and impact as charging mid-tempo build ups whiplash into fits of 625 Thrash styled rapid fire stop 'n' start. The lyrics are stream of consciousness about love, (the title track is "Strawberries," though absolutely nothing on this record has any resemblance to the DAMNED LP of the same name). "Guy Fawkes" and "Wasting Time" are half in German and half in English. The art is kind of indie outsider art of cut in half monkeys, snakes and hexagons. Brown vinyl, of course! (KS)
(Kink / Meta Matter)

SICK THOUGHTS – "I Got Hands/I'm Tired of You"

This is a damn fetching looking punk record; eye vomit inducing cover color combos, sloppy lettering, and a sexy hot pink colored platter. This stuff reeks of '70s lazy druggy Aussie punk to me, and not just cuz their name is similar to the SICK THINGS. This would be quite at home on one of the *Murder Punk* comps. "I Got Hands" is a love song about choosing masturbation over the object of the singer's desire. Really grew on me after three listens. "I'm Tired Of You" is the real winner here. Venom spitting SAINTS worship. Like crawling through spit; piss, and peanut butter. Feels good. (RO)
(Hidden Volume)

SLUDGE – "Conduct" LP

The sight of the Crust War Records logo alone will have a certain set reaching for their wallets, and rightfully so, but please rest assured that this record very much stands up on its own merits. These punks from the backwoods of Wakayama prefecture deliver ten tracks of super metallic punk that's equal parts GHOUL (Japan), ZOUO and DEATH SIDE. The incredibly charismatic vocals are probably the most striking element on first listen, recalling legends like Masami and Cherry, as Katsuya slurs and shouts and sometimes croons the lyrics. But the amazing acrobatic guitar solos are equally as compelling, sometimes blasting off into IRON MAIDEN-esque dual harmonized leads. I realize that I'm making a ton of metal references, and this is a very metal album, but don't leave this with the impression that it's only a metal record. SLUDGE are equally adept at huge gang choruses and driving punk riffs that keep the material well grounded in hardcore punk as well. While they are not terribly musically similar, the polish and swagger that SLUDGE possesses definitely reminds me of GASTUNK as well. This is a band that not only kicks tons of ass, but knows that it does and revels in it. (AU)
(Crust War / Discos Mutacion)

SNØB – "Exploit Me" EP

What we have here is raw, lo-fi, and slightly sloppy hardcore, with original riffs and a self-loathing, basement-dwelling vibe. The buzzsaw guitar tone is great, the slow songs are as good as the fast, and the vocals walk a great line between commandeering drill sergeant and mutant freak. The lyrics to "I'm Ashamed" are can be summed up as "guilty of being white, stop the hate because we're all members of the human race and are responsible for our own actions," and it seems what the singer sees as "racial pity" is actually people of color addressing their past and present grievances, which is hardly a barrier to "moving on." A little embarrassing, but I otherwise like this record. (DG)
(Hardware)

SONGS FOR SNAKES – "Year of the Snake" LP

This sounds like the '90s, like those bands that loved later HÜSKER DÜ and the DESCENDENTS. It sounds like something for folks that still put on RADON records and think the last JAWBREAKER record was good. It's catchy, it's upbeat, it sounds good, they know how to sing (a bit gruff but it works well) and harmonize, I'm hard pressed to think up a new band that has done this stuff any better in the last ten years or so. It almost sounds too slick but walks the line pretty well. I'll almost even forgive the "handwritten" font. (PA)
(Timid Crusher)

S.O.R. – "Sistem Oragnizirane Regresije" LP

Another beautiful document of '80s ex-Yugo punk from NE! Records, this time by Slovenia's S.O.R. This LP includes demos from 1986-87 and some great sounding live material. The studio recordings also sound great with the right amount of roughness around the edges, and the style is melodic, but with just the right amount of pogoing drive to demonstrate some hardcore influence. For those who have been paying attention, it's in league with other NE! bands like PROCESS and QUOD MASSACRE in quality and style. Incredible looking gatefold jacket and two thick full 12" size inserts, all slathered with great photos, newspaper clippings, lyrics, and band info. Drool-worthy quality, and you'll still be able to get it for less than 20 bucks from select US distros, even after import costs! Highly recommended. (MA)
(NE!)

STALINS OF SOUND – "Tank Tracks" 12"

San Diego rockers get synthetic, or angry nerds, with every DEVO song ever recorded on their laptops, run to their guitars. MOTHERBAUGH style vocals, chunky distorted guitar, and terrible sounding (in the legitimately bad way) drum machine pervade the record. The lyrics are nothing to write home about, except that couple of the songs seem as if they were written during / right after a bad breakup, and as such seem angry towards women (or just one woman?). I can't hang with those kind of vibes, even if they are in my imagination. In this case they may well be. Or I might simply not be able to hang with directionless and poorly intellectualized misanthropy. I didn't like most of this record, but the one song without any rock elements (read: guitars, bass, unprocessed vocals) was actually pretty creepy, and if the entire record sounded like "Abominations of Fire," I might be able to recommend it as an exercise in scaring yourself. (LP)
(Slovenly)

THE STASI – "State Voyeurism" flexi

There are so many things I like about this flexi, three short punk tracks that remind me of some early California bands, one being, SOCIAL UNREST, it has a similar snotty simplicity that always works for me. Very cool record, track it down! (MS)
(World Gone Mad)

STERILIZED – "Zero Sum Game" EP

Oh shit, this is good! Megaton D-beat inspired hardcore with super pissed vocals. If the idea of JOE DENUNZIO fronting DISASTER floats your boat, this is the record for you. No frills, no leads, just punishing riff after punishing riff driven by heavy d-beats and topped off with those fantastic vocals. Grade A fucking hardcore. Get in to it. (AU)
(Warthog Speak)

THE TERRORISTS – "Crazy Life/Crazy Life (live)"

Hahaha holy fuck! I can't think of many *uber raer* KBD *grailz* that have evaded me in my twenty years of collecting, but TERRORISTS is at the top of the list. So raer most had never even heard it. Bakersfield, California had like two bonafide '70s punk bands, and they shared members, y'know, like the LIZERDS and shit. Well, LIZERDS is great, it's a weirdo spazz out, but TERRORISTS is more of the classic pisstake you would hope for. I mean, it's no "classic punk," it is straight fucked up Americana with menacing shitface vox a la CRAZY JACK & THE AUTOMATICS. I hope the reissue-r got a real sleeve with his OG copy, because otherwise there is like one sleeve in existence. Not sure the reissue cover is even what it looks like. Great!! By the way, they only had one song, so naturally the B-Side is a live version. (GB)
(Going Underground)

THINGZ – "Red Future" 12"

Truly great records generally are both original and well executed. And to be a *good* record you generally need to be one or the other. Depending on what kind of person you are, one of those two attributes is more important. This album gets a zero for originality, but a 9.5 (out of 10) for well executed. The THINGZ play garage rock and they will swallow you whole with their infectious pop hooks. It's a super fun record, but nearly every songs riff is traceable to a pre-existing song. My personal favorite is the opening track which is a dead ringer for "Hand Jive," made popular by the motion picture GREASE. But if you are someone who doesn't need your music to reinvent the wheel (you just need it to rock!) this album is pretty awesome. (FS)
(Coffee Addict)

THIS IS BRAIN WASH – CD

First thing I noticed about this band is the singer sounds a lot like JELLO BIAFRA. If the remaining members of the DEAD KENNEDYS had snagged this guy, maybe their reunion efforts wouldn't be as frowned upon. Musically it doesn't have the DK's weirdness, this is more late '90s style punk à la ALKALINE TRIO or even ANTI FLAG with a dash of old school production. There are lead vocals done by a more gruff singer too. With members from various countries, this is pretty good. If I heard one of these songs on college radio I would think it's JELLO's new band without the sarcasm. (RL)
(self-released)

TRASH AXIS – "Grotesque" LP

San Diego's TRASH AXIS is a very unique animal. To the point it will be nearly impossible to describe what they are doing. Their music is sort of a progressive hardcore / metal opera. Oh sit still, no need to run away screaming. These songs are all over the place, with moments of heaviness, but no sitting still. The inclusion of keyboards, glockenspiel, sax, and accordion and a vocalist who can both sing and scream bloody murder might help give you an idea. They don't sound like any of these bands; but have a similar approach / feel to writing songs; MR BUNGLE, LE SCRAWL, !T.O.O.H.!, CIRCLE TAKES THE SQUARE and ROLO TOMASSI. There is something of both a circus feel and a gypsy folk attitude with progressive music that often gets heavy. The manic, insane, even creepy feeling they can give off as Anna screams, the guitar buzzsaws with a hardcore sound yet the keyboards play a swirling circus / clown theme is something I love. On more than one track they really do sound like LE SCRAWL combined with ROLO TOMASSI and at other times MR BUNGLE. But the folk / cabaret feel seems to always show up. I love all this and have already listened to the album five times, but if you are looking for a normal punk / hardcore / metal thing you won't find it here. (MH)
(Trash Axis)

UNHOLY TWO – "Talk about Hardcore" LP

Rough weirdness in a very BUTTHOLE SURFERS way. You know, acid nightmares or whatever, but plunged into the dark hate of the likes of PUSSY GALORE. It's dropped the goof aspect to focus on the muck, with either fast chaos or a dirge with a freakout lazy guitar solo dolloped on. It sticks to the route of a rhythm section doing something solid and repetitive, maintaining some level of sense, and then everyone just kind of dog piles on and rolls across the top of that foundation. At first I hated this, but I think I just needed to eat a meal. What I'm trying to say is that this is not anything new or dangerous or anything, if you listen to this type of thing you've probably heard this record already like a thousand times over but it is a good record, a stellar example of this kind of jam. Oh, and there is a NON cover which is fine but I could really do without the Boyd Rice buttlicking because I see it as a sign of total lameness but apparently it's real impossible to do this type of jam without being some amount of turd. But yeah, this is a good solid record. (MM)
(12XU)

UNHOLY TWO – "Talk About Hardcore" LP

Another top turnbuckle head smasher of totally mental, noise-rock by these Columbus weirdos. Loads of trudge, feedback and hate-sludge with titles inspired by dumbfuck NFL teams ("Redskins") and bad-ass pro wrestlers: "Hard Times Daddy" (via Dusty "The

American Dream" Rhodes' awesome promo, which is actually sung a bit like him if you listen closely). The live version of "Cut the Music (I'm The Nightstalker)" is great and filled with a ton of chaotic guitar and pounding drums. I'm gonna have also mark out for the green mist spewing Great Muta's face on the cover. He also gets a tune named after him "Muta Scale." After all, the dude was the DEATH SIDE of wrestling. He once nailed Hulk Hogan's stupid face with a ring bell—talk about hardcore, *indeed*! Anyway, this is actually kinda uh, musical if you've listened to a bunch of ear / brain damaged stuff from labels like Bulb or Noiseville. I now award them the championship belt after as they have the BRAINBOMBS down for the count out… 1-2-3. (JD)
(12XU)

VACATION CLUB – "Heaven is Too High" LP

These kids from Indiana give us a solid full length album of '60s throwback garage pop. They have the fuzz and reverb cranked all the way up. It's actually so poppy that it boarders on bubblegum. Catchy stuff and filled with endless harmonized vocals. All the songs are soft around the edges, and unfortunately blend together somewhere because there isn't much diversity between the tracks. Yet, when you turn the record player off, the songs still rattle around your head, and you hunger to drop the needle back down. If you're kinda nerdy and have a soft spot for teenbeat garage, this album is totally worth looking into. (FS)
(Magnetic South)

THE VALENTEENS – "Fun in the Sun with…" EP

You have here four songs of fuzzed out indie / pop-punk. Musically it's in the vein of the new Olympia/ DINO JR love sound but maybe a little heavier on the pop side of things. The songs are catchy, mid to up-tempo numbers with a couple of hooks and just a bit of guitar shredding. Unfortunately the vocals are sung off key and not in a charming way, more in a grating, painful way. It's a shame because the last song is really very good. Please stop putting so many pictures of yourselves on the cover, and the insert. (PA)
(High Fashion Industries)

VALSE TRISTE – "Sininen Hetki" EP

Taking their name from the "Sad Waltz" of Finnish composer JEAN SIBELIUS, this long standing Finnish band began in 1983 and started releasing records in the '90s in the real inventive period of Finnish hardcore where things… uh, got weird. Luckily, their five tracks here *stay* weird in the classic style of the time, with the impertinence and frantic energy of more widely known '80s Finnish sounds while pushing the vocal savagery and snarls to further extremes. With vocal chord shattering rawness over a jumpy post-NOMEANSNO musical complexity, underlining a sound built with pulsing bass lines, while always taking the straight ahead and just bending it ever so slightly askew in unpredictable song to song attack. That off balance mooring makes what VALSE TRISTE does always have a freshness, and their first recording in a few years lands a solid entry to their long catalog. Lyrics entirely in Finnish, back cover has a pencil maze! (KS)
(self-released)

VEKTOR – "SKKK" CD

What the fuck is going on here?! VEKTOR hails from Japan and the first song on their CD is a mindfuck. It starts with digital scrapes and fuck-ups before diving into a weirdo, prog-punk vibe with bored vocals. Within a minute and a half, it's over. The next song sounds like a deep space radio hit from Japan in 2019. It has the production of digital radio and it's off putting. A couple of songs later, it sounds like they recorded a ZOUNDS-style rocker on a broken 4-track. The last song is a synth-based number that sounds like it was recorded on 8-bit (think Nintendo music) equipment. The whole CD is a challenging listen and all of the information is in Japanese, so I can't make any sense of it. Totally fucked… I can't tell if I mean that in a good way or not. (GH)
(MCR)

VERBAL ABUSE – "Just An American Band" LP

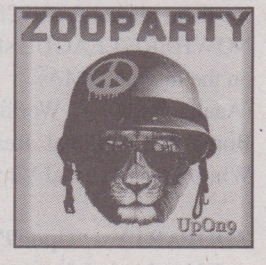
Man this fucking record. If you collect '80s USHC, this LP is probably one of the five-ten US LPs you never found. Just impossible. I passed on the Bitzcore reissue for at least a decade before I finally snagged an original copy on SF's Fowl Records. Well, this copy's on red wax on the highly acclaimed Beer City label. It's fast pissed off thrashcore, which sounds powerful, though admittedly was a bit of a disappointment after searching for a decade. I guess if it had been easier to find way back when and I had it on a tape as a teenager it might be some epochal life changing shit, but as-is it's kinda middle of the road thrash with a couple mix-tape worthy standouts, plus their classic take on GRAND FUNK's "We're An American Band." Bro band SICK PLEASURE is way better, though SLAYER might disagree (they covered four songs offa dis). (GB)
(Beer City)

VORTIS – "Modern Savage" CD

This is old school art punk from Chicago. I'm hearing a little DEAD KENNEDYS, MINUTEMEN, and MEATMEN here. Raw production with spastic songs and social political lyrics. This is good but I can't stop thinking this is just something from the '80s. Which I'm sure is their intention. So if you want a new band who sound like an old US punk band, check these guys out because they have it down. (RL)
(self-released)

WAR OF WORDS – "The Emperor's Clothes Will Never Keep You Warm" EP

This is pretty good, but unfortunately, all I can think of



when I hear this is AGAINST ME! Granted, it seems like they really like the *Reinventing Axl Rose*, or *Eternal Cowboy* albums, which were great… but it just feels more like a serious bite than an influence. (DZ)
(NES)

ZIG-ZAGS – LP

A aad mix of sharp metal-ish guitars and catchy, punk-y hard rawk, topped with some late-'80s Homestead label (ie SQUIRREL BAIT). Other times they come off like SAVIOURS, WITCH (J. MASCIS' side band) and the STOOGES (especially on "Soul Sound"). Still other places like they sound like a gonzo '79-'81 underground metal-punk act like WHITE BOY AND THE AVERAGE RAT BAND. "Voices of the Paranoid" is a killer, downer dirge that never gets boring. "No Blade of Grass" is a perfect pop-punker by way of fuzz guitar. A total, right-on summer jam for bike riding / skatin' / drinkin'. Made for heshers *and* punks. (JD)
(In the Red)

ZIPLOCK – LP

This is a style of punk that I feel like I have no reference for or connection to. It's got some grit, hooks, and power—all things I like. But the production is sooooo polished and Warped Tour-ready, which makes it seem more fit for bars and clubs rather than the punx. A lack of info and lyrics makes it even harder for me to dig deeper. As for the music, there's a definite street punk backbone present, but with much more aggression and a snarling vocalist that could just as easily front a hardcore band. A competent and solid effort, but I can't see this appealing much to anyone outside their realm of friends, or people that happened to see them play at the VICE SQUAD and ANTI NOWHERE LEAGUE shows I saw flyers for on the internet. (MA)
(Aaahh Real / A World We Never Made / Bomb-All / Global Resistance / Suburban White Trash / Urinal Vinyl)

ZOOPARTY – "Upon9" CD

Old school-style swedish punk rock with a pop-punk edge. It's everything you would expect; gang vocals, three chords and songs played as fast as they can. They sound like something that would probably be released by Hellcat in the '90s and share a bill with ROGER MIRET AND THE DISASTERS. Not my thing but a total party! (AP)
(Deadlamb)

V/A – "Hamburger Saignant" LP

A great compilation of fifteen garage bands from France & Belgium. There is not a stinker on it. Well, maybe I'd skip the DRAGSTER track after a few plays. You also get DUSTY MUSH, COMBOMATIX, SKEPTICS, PIERRE ET BASTIEN, WHITE ASS, KAVIAR SPECIAL, CHIMIKS and more. There is garage, garage punk, garage psych and garage pop with some surf-y elements and even a touch of reggae. Some of these bands incorporate the JOHN DWYER echoey yelp, but it seems to sound less played out with a French accent. All exclusive tracks which is nice since I hate buying these things because of a band or two only to discover that I already have that song on a seven inch. Great stuff. (CK)
(Frantic)

V/A – "It's From London" EP

That would be London, Canada, not the other one. A compilation of local bands released by the guys who do the radio show It's Trash!. Short blasts of hardcore, pop punk, garage punk from the GLEBES, CHACHI ON ACID, GATGAS, DISLEKSICK, EXCELSIOR, DONT TOUCH THE DANCERS, and BATH SALTS. It ends with a poppy garage tune by JOHNNY TERRIEN AND THE BAD LIEUTENANTS, which is a long one at 2 minutes 21 seconds. Eight bands playing short songs on a seven inch record. What's not to like? (CK)
(It's Trash!)

V/A – "Turist I Tillvaron Vol. 7" LP

This is the seventh volume of this series, remarkably since 2011. My biggest problem is the design sense of these comps is never that appealing. It's not really the main point, which is to document and expose people to a wide swathe of new bands, but compilations roles in doing that has long been usurped by blogs, band online sites and free downloads… So to make someone pay for something or just to make a lasting document, well, *use* the advantages of print and the physical medium, make it really appealing and strong. The people who do these comps are not totally at fault here; only a handful of the eighteen bands on this comp use their small square of information for lyrics or much more than a logo, band photo and email address. But there's probably some frustrated punk graphic designer languishing in a Gatukök in Uppsala dreaming of taking on something like this to build a portfolio and serving his or her last Mosbricka. Taking less of a "Why isn't this *Really Fast Vol, Two?*" long view, and seeing this comp as a radio show styled slice, sampling a track each of some of the newest bands in Sweden, there's plenty appealing refreshingly and broadly across the punk spectrum. (Powerhouse thrash bands M:40 and URSUT are the only bands I'd heard of before). CONTORTURE land somewhere between MOB 47 and death metal, There's a lot of great melodic punk with female vocals—the 1980-ish, Orange County-ish MARY'S KIDS, a lo-fi garage-out by EIN ZWEI DIE, and KLARTGRABBENSKAHAENEPA MEDSILVERTEJJP AND UFFE use the twisting melody of the Swedish language to its fullest extent over song-driven punk, and who, without translating it, might possibly have the name of the century? The BOMBETTES recall the RUNAWAYS in catchy glam bounce. An ace lo-fi track by ATGADSPROGRAMMET stands on a rock solid song structure. KORFAST play desperate guitar distorted thrash. And so on; despite my grousing, once you begin dissect this latest comp there's eighteen good and solid reasons to pick up this volume! (KS)
(Turist I Tillvaron)

V/A – "The Young, Loud and Snotty Comp. North Florida Punk Rock" LP

Here's a lot of punk bands from North Florida who are into getting drunk and playing Fat Wreck / Epitaph-style punk'n'roll. Every band on the first side sounds the same to me: harmonic-chord punk sung by some dude complaining about a girl or talking about being drunk. Some people love that shit. I'm not one of them. Some of the bands are the REACHERS, HATCHET FACE, WASTEDIST and WHISKEY DOGS. Side two starts off with FAITH CITY FIASCO who almost sound like rap-rock. Woof! BEAU CRUM AND THE WEIGHTED HANDS break it up by offering up a more somber, acoustic number. It's okay, but only because it's sandwiched between utter dreck. The rest of the compilation is littered with metal-tinged punk, shit that sounds like NOFX and the kind of stuff that makes me question my involvement in punk. I know it takes a lot of money and work to put out something like this (and I respect that), but I am bored to tears by every second of this. Is there an audience for this? Also, there's no insert and absolutely no band information whatsoever. It feels cheap. (GH)
(Y.L.S.)

CONTACT INFO • CONTACT INFO • CONTACT INFO • CONTACT INFO • CONTACT INFO • CONTACT INFO • CONTACT INFO

12XU: 12XU.net

3xReaper: adskinner.bandcamp.com

82: 82records.net/index2.htm

Aaahh Real: shop.real-records.co.uk

Agrowax: agrowax.blogspot.com

Alleycat: alleycatrecords.bigcartel.com

All Torn Up: alltornup.bandcamp.com

Bad Hair Life: badhairliferecords.blogspot.com

Bad People: badpeoplerecords@hellokitty.com

Batshit: batshit.bigcartel.com

Beer City: beercity.com

Bikini Kill: bikinikill.com

Black Cube: blackcuberecords.com

Blasphemour: blasphemourrecords.com

Bombsite: jmhouse@cityofdust.com

Brainsand: marketzero.bigcartel.com

Breakout: breakoutrecords@aol.com

Burnt Bridges: burntbridgesrecords.com

Casual Punks: casualpunks.bigcartel.com

Chaos Rurale: chaosrurale.com

Combat Rock Industry: Vaasankatu 1, 00500 Helsinki, FINLAND, combatrockindustry.net

Corsário Discos: corsario.discos@gmail.com

Cricket Cemetery: cricketcemetery.storeenvy.com

Crust War: punkanddestroy@s4.dion.ne.jp, B1F, 2-9-5 Nishi-Shinsaibashi, Chuo-ku, Osaka City, 542-0086 JAPAN

Deadlamb: deadlambrecords.com

Deranged: derangedrecords.com

Die Slaughterhaus: dieslaughterhausrecords.com

Discos Mutacion: discosmutacion@gmail.com, 2 Cazenove Rd, London, N16 6BD, UK

Destructors: thedestructorsuk@googlemail.com

Danger: 17 Rue Keller, 75011 Paris, FRANCE, dangerrecordsparis@gmail.com

Don't Panic It's A Distro: dontpanicitsadistro.bandcamp.com

Erste Theke Tontrager: erstetheketontrager.blogspot.com

FARANG: badvibrationsrecords.bigcartel.com

Fat Wreck Chords: fatwreck.com

Filthy Rat: filthyratrecords.blogspot.com

Forbidden Seabass: forbiddenseabass.tumblr.com

Frantic City: franticcity.free.fr

Friendbeast: friendbeast.bandcamp.com

Funky Frankenstein: funkyfrankenstein.com

Future Virgins: 705 Spears Ave, Chattanooga, TN. 37405, facebook.com/futurevirgins

Gay Panic: gaypanicnyc.com

General Speech: generalspeech.storenvy.com

Give Praise: givepraiserecords.com, PO Box 494, Barnstable, MA 02630-0494

Glory Hole: gloryholerecords.com

Going Underground: 1822 G Street, Bakersfield, CA 93301

Good Times: facebook.com/goodtimesrecords

GRMMSK: totstellen@yahoo.de

Hardware: PO Box 1646, 49006 Osnabrück, GERMANY, hardware-records.com

Here and Now: hereandnowrecs.wordpress.com

HHBTM: hhbtm.com

H1N1: nomads.storenvy.com

Hidden Volume: hiddenvolume.com

High Fashion Industries: highfashionindustries.com

Hobo: hoborec.com

Hygene: hygenerecords.storeenvy.com

Infinity Cat: infinitycat.com

In the Red: PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050, intheredrecords.com

It's Trash!: itstrashrecords.bandcamp.com

Juvenile Delinquent: juveniledelinquent.bandcamp.com

Katorga Works: katorgaworks.bigcartel.com

Kink: ralf@kink-records.de

Let's Pretend: PO Box 1663, Bloomington, IN 47402, letspretendrecords.com

Loud Punk: loudpunk.com, PO Box 6115, Albany NY, 12203

Lumpy Rex: 1924 Forest Ave, St Luis, MO. 63139, martinpoop@msn.com

Magnetic South: magneticsouthrecordings.org

MCR: 157 Kamiagu Maizuru, Kyoto 624-0913, JAPAN, dance.ne.jp/~mcr

Meta Matter: metamatterrecords.blogspot.com

MidSummer: midsummer-records.de

Miss Molly Music: miss-molly-music.com

MMM Discos: discosmmm.com

The Mostly Dead: themostlydead.bandcamp.com

Mülltüte: muetue@heartfirst.net

NE!: nerecords.se

NES: nesrecords.tumblr.com

NIE-ZETT: nie-zett.com

No Breaks: 184 Rogers Street NE, Suite #301, Atlanta, GA 30317, nobreaksrecords.com

Nuclear Ass: nuclearassrecords@hotmail.com

Paha Tukka Elama: bhl@badhairliferecords.com

Pankratium: oldmanstrength1.bandcamp.com/music

Pelican Pow Wow: pelicanpowwow.com

Phantom: phantom.tk

Pity: xpityx.bandcamp.com

Protagonist Music: protagonistmusic.bigcartel.com

Race: dierotzz.tripod.com

Ramekuukkeli: ramekuukkeli.nettisivu.org

Richie: testosturtunes.com

RIP Society: ripsociety.bigcartel.com

Royal Pines: royalpines.bandcamp.com

Rundgang: rundgong.se

Sarasteen Pienmuovi: kapykaarti.mine.nu

Schizophrenic: 17 W 4th Street, Hamilton, ON, Canada L9C 3M2

Sista Versen: sistaversen.bigcartel.com

Slovenly: slovenly.com

Songs for Snakes: songsforsnakes.bandcamp.com

Snappy Little Numbers: PO Box 370602, Denver, CO 80237, snappylittlenumbers.blogspot.com

Step Backwards: myspace.com/puolanlakot

Stay Sweet: staysweetrecords.bandcamp.com

Steeltown: steeltownrecords.de

Suburban White Trash: POB 270594, Ft Collins, CO 80527, suburbanwhitetrashrecords.com

Suicide: Dahlströmsgatan 24, 414 65 Gothenburg, Sweden, info@suiciderecords.se

Supreme Echo: supremeecho.bigcartel.com

Svart: svartrecords.com

The Thingz: thethingz.bandcamp.com

This Is Brainwash: facebook.com/thisisbrainwashband

Total Fucker: whokilledfucker.blogspot.com

Tranquilo: tranquilorecords.com

Trash Axis: trashaxis.bandcamp.com

Turist I Tillvaron: sirling.blogspot.com

Vortis: vortisrock.com

Vwyrd Wurd: vwyrdwurd.com

Wallrider: wallriderecords.com

Wanda: wandarecords.de

Warthog Speak: www.warthogspeak.com

What's Left: whatsleftzine@yahoo.com

World Gone Mad: worldgonemadrecords.bandcamp.com

YLS : 79 Sailfish Dr E, Atlantic Beach, FL 32233

Zaxxon: zaxxon.ca

DEMOS

Send cassettes and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Please note, anything other than vinyl or CD will be reviewed in this section. CD-Rs with no artwork will not be considered. Reviews by Vanessa Aswipe, Matt Badenhop, Robert Collins, Greg Harvester, Modee, Rotten Ron, and Jason Ryan.

APOGEE SOUND CLUB / K^REN – *Splitting Hairs* – This cassette is slightly confusing. There is no information on the actual tape, and the entire booklet inside is SOLELY about APOGEE SOUND CLUB. Is K^REN the name of the release? Is it a split with a band called K^REN? Why would there be info on only one band? Well, I hate to admit it, but I had to scour the innernette to find out. This is a split between the two bands, so let's get on with it. ASG is a band I do love, and their side did not disappoint. Songs range from pretty, acoustic ditties, to angular, choppy tirades, maybe like a super pissed at the world MINUTEMEN, and even some short, tolerable blasts of good noise. At twenty great songs, I hope this sees an actual vinyl release, because it rules. The K^REN side was, unfortunately, a really hard listen. More noise in their punk than I am really comfortable with. Some songs seemed to switch from being recorded with a boom box, to 30 seconds of a semi-legit recording, and then right back to the original version they recorded on their walkman (as a side note, although I didn't like that, fucking kudos for pulling that off somehow). Some songs simply cut off in the middle, and others had "overdubs" that sounded like they just recorded bits of TV on top of the songs. Totally worth it for the ASG side. (Modee) (33-song cassette, lyrics included for the ASG side, apogeesoundclub.bandcamp.com, karensmells.bandcamp.com)

A PRIORI – Imagine you've found your way into a basement. There in the back, in the shadows, is this bright green dybbuk of cassettes. Of course you cannot resist opening it, and a restless possession reveals itself upon you without warning. Yet, what did you expect? That's what hearing this tape feels like; these gnarly grooves require your immediate attention. The members of A PRIORI are not new to the bay area punk scene. I feel this is vocalist Laura's best voice that I've heard. The scream "tied to a ghost" sends chills up my spine. It is amazing how much she is able to say, based on the lyrics sheet, without overpowering the passage of each song. The collaborative effort here has created a refreshing spinning rhythm as well. Each song is so cohesive you take for granted the subtle but expertise craft of the changes. "Air Hunger" and "Mannequin" toward the end are my absolute favorite plodding numbers. I'm sort of obsessed with "Air Hunger," the ultimate hammer. Something made you go into that basement and the dark force of A PRIORI pulls you into their anxious ever-circling chant. (Jason) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, apriorioakland@gmail.com)

ARRACH – *Sabotage* – The note accompanying this CD-R says it's slated to be released October 2011… either that's a typo or this thing got stuck at customs for two-and-a-half years? Better late than never. France's ARRACH does the metalcore thing, and it's hard for me to trash it when they're coming from the radical/anarchist side of the spectrum, but I just can't stand this style. Polished recording, crunchy guitars, clicky galloping drums, and that "wa-wa-wa-wa!" tough (but not really) vocal style. And there's a SICK OF IT ALL cover. Very skilled band, intolerable style. (Matt) (12-song CD-R, lyrics included, arrach@wandadoo.fr)

THE ASOUND – A nine song, 50-minute exercise in dirge, the ASOUND slog their way through heavy meandering stoner/sludge with 16rpm guitar solos. There are songs that approach jam band territory, but within the context of a monstrous low-end attack. The obvious references are all there, but if the start of "Tater Hole Blues" doesn't make you think BONGZILLA meets ALICE IN CHAINS, then I don't know what else we can do for you. Bonus points for including the live photo with the dude chilling in a lawn chair in front of the band. (Robert) (9-song CD-R, lyrics not included, tsugurirecords.blogspot.com)

AWKWARD KISSER – Makes for an awkward listen! They're from Miami and do a very damaged and plodding style of noisy hardcore, like early CLOCKCLEANER but with zero hooks. I find the repetition and drone rather boring, but the anger seeping through and the tension it creates is undeniable. Songs blend together and there's no tracklist, so my song count is a guess… (Matt) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, awkwardkisser.bandcamp.com, robert.king004@mymdc.net)

BAD CANOES – *Sisterhood is Powerful* – This Philly(?) band plays short, fun synth punk songs, led by a strong female vocalist who you will recognize if you're schooled on the current state of indie punk (think females who scream a lot and a guitarist that gives J Mascis a run for his money). The instrumentation is just bass, keyboards and drums. It's super tight and No Wave-y, but still fun. The lyrics are almost nonsense at times, singing about ambrosia salad and eating babies. I might write it off as hokey if the singer wasn't screaming her fucking head off. So, yeah, I like it. (Greg) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, badcanoes@gmail.com)

BATH PARTY – *EP IV* – When I saw that the first track was titled "It's a Beautiful Day," I knew I probably wouldn't like this and I was right. BATH PARTY from Portland plays psychedelic, surf rock. The three-minute guitar solos really bugged me and they're on every song. I like their use of the synth, but it still reminds me of the poor mans version of the DOORS. (Vanessa) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, bathparty.bandcamp.com, bathpartyband@gmail.com)

BIRDSOUNDS – The kids in BROWN SUGAR minus the singer, this outfit took a wrong turn at the junction of Weirdo Avenue and Freak Street when this new band started. Space age swampy garage punk from another realm stripping all pretense away from the first note…this is true mutant music, the kind of shit that starts as a joke and then you realize is probably cooler than your "real" band. The tape says there's wax coming soon. That excites me. (Robert) (?-song cassette, lyrics not included, B. Gaffney 593 Mt. Hope Ave., Rochester, NY 14620, mediaschlitz@gmail.com)

BITCHFACE – *High Maintenance* – Somehow New Orleans manages to make catchy, undistorted, non-D-beat, music not noise, and dare I say "melodic" (even though it's a bad word) sound fucking *dangerous*, and BITCHFACE are exactly all of that. "Champion" is pure fukkn gold, a hardcore burner that puts you instantly on edge musically and grabs you by the throat lyrically. The band is loose, casually meandering their way along and smashing your face. (Robert) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, bitchfacenola@bandcamp.com)

BOY SPROUTS – Power-pop/ garage rock from New Orleans. It's just two dudes playing guitar and drums. It's a good start and a super rough, basic recording, but they could really benefit for a too-busy bass player…..and a recording that doesn't sound like the mics are somehow being pulled away from them as they play. Not bad. (Greg) (4 song CD-R, lyrics not included, jspeters64@gmail.com)

CARRIE FUCILE – *Subtext* – A cassette reproduction of an art school sound installation.

The concept is interesting: recordings of various people singing, and the non-articulated parts of those tracks manipulated—the breath, the inhale and the non-word all woven together and treated by the artist. As a full installation, I can easily imagine this being an all-sensory experience. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, protagonistmusic.bigcartel.com)

CCTV – I've been waiting patiently for this tape to come my way ever since I first heard of the band. The band combines members of TREPANNING and EXTRA FEELER to bring you urgent, synth-driven, dark post-punk. I like how the synth is just kind of all over the place in this band…sometimes it accompanies the other instruments melodically. Other times, it's just all noisy, challenging and fucked up. The lyrics hint at a deep anxiety and paranoia that comes from the claustrophobia of city living. The closer, "Confessor" is a five-minute beast that slows things down and settles into a nice throb. Excellent shit! (Greg) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, cctvnyz@gmail.com, cctvnyc.bandcamp.com)

CUTESYPOO COHORT – *As If!!* – Fukkn weirdos making weird sounds. Neurotic drunken bouncy punk with bratty male/female vocals and an obvious disrespect for established "cool" paradigms. This is either the best thing ever when seen live, or an obnoxious pile of turds…but it's the fact that I can't tell that makes this SF outfit intriguing. Maybe I'll only see them once…but I *will* see them. So the demo worked. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, cutesypoocohort@gmail.com, dirtyrabbitrecords.com)

DAN MELCHOIR – *Live at Philly Record Exchange* – Drugged out brooding psych jams, three notes slow burns with a guitar that meanders in and out of the riff at a pace that suits the guitarist and the guitarist only. Breathy SONIC YOUTH vocals are sporadic but quite welcome when they decide to stop by. The kind of shit you can get lost in or drunk to… your choice. (Robert) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, staleheat.bigcartel.com)

DEATH INJECTION – *Don't Care* – Pretty meat-and-potatoes straight-edge Boston hardcore here with a nice raw production. Three songs from their upcoming album, short and sweet. The guitar riff on the second song is awesome! HC fans take note. (Matt) (3- song cassette, lyrics included, deathinjectionxxx@gmail.com)

DEATH SEX ADVOCATES – Hardcore punk from Cincinnati with more emphasis on the punk. This is the kind of music that I want to hear but don't get to hear too often. I imagine these people don't have jobs, they smoke weed all day, and carry around cans of spray paint with them wherever they go. Fast, dark and mean punk songs, dual male and female vocals, with lyrics about skateboarding and hating indie rock. The coolest track is "Rabid Lust" which starts off dreamy and psychedelic, like a drug binge, and then rages on into something heavy and fast. This is D.S.A's first release and it makes me want to take bong rips and skate down hills. Get this! (Vanessa) (10-song cassette, lyrics not included, dsacincinnati.bandcamp.com, gabbygrymes@yahoo.com)

THE DEVIL'S REJECTS – The person who sings for this band makes Tim Armstrong and Jake Burns sound like clear-spoken, eloquent bastards. Raspy, raspy vocals top this punk n roll band with wah-wah guitar leads. Nothing too special going on. The songs drag on and go nowhere. The band is lively enough and seems like they're into what they're doing, but I'm already tired of each song before it even gets going. (Greg) (7 song CD-R, lyrics included, the devilsrejects.at)

DURBAN POISON – *Thunderwolf* – Female fronted punk from Canada with a strong rock'n'roll feel, but in a Dangerhouse kind of way. Thick bass and guitars pair up with a strong stomping pulse to set the precedent for plenty of dancing. The vocalist has a melodic and percussive style, adding swagger to the sound. I think there's a DONNAS cover? Fun times. (Matt) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, experienceshake.com)

FAILED STATES – Cheers to interesting demo tapes! Rather than calling this dark, I think I'll describe it as gray, with some streaks of pale blue and violet. Jangly melodies spattered over a mid-paced drumbeat. The vocals sound a bit unsure to me, but they're set in the background, so maybe it's intentional. Really interesting sound…like the first SACCHARINE TRUST 12" mixed with EA80 and a little (like 1/8 a teaspoon) of KILLING JOKE. Sound neat, eh? One of the more promising new bands I've heard lately. (Matt) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, 28 Locust St. #204, Brooklyn, NY 11206)

FELDSPAR – The scrawled note tells me that this band has already come and gone, which is a shame since I could use more shit like this in my (punk) life. Dual vocal raw as shit hardcore with a penchant for a good song buried in the dirt and getting messy. It's like a band from another time… a time when BLACK FORK would play with BUZZOV*EN and some emo band on tour and that wasn't weird (that probably happened, right?). FELDSPAR sound intent… they sound important. At least they did. Recommended regardless of your chosen subgenre. (Robert) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, $4ppd, Black Mold, 3536 Haight Ave., Portland, OR 97227, blackmold.storeenvy.com)

FLASH OUT – *Terminated Efficiency* – Metallic grind crusters from Winnipeg, this debut effort shows a crew of maniacs as well-versed in EXTINCTION OF MANKIND as EXODUS. A weird tinny recording and an all over the map mix job give this blast a dose of unintended authenticity and they certainly know how to shred. Throaty crust vox take a while to justify against the breakneck thrash riffs, but I got won over pretty quickly. The CD-R just a teaser, these jammers should be out on wax by the time you read this. (Robert) (15-song CD-R, lyrics not included, thrashard@live.ca)

FLEABITE – Yeah! This is just what I needed! Fuzzy pop songs that are sometimes barely held together and have strong, perfect-level-of-distortion guitar riffs. Every song on here has such a hook and the people in this band have a strong ear for melody. I could compare it to some early K Records stuff. I could make some lazy comparisons to HENRY'S DRESS or a less cutesy CUB. I guess I just did. Look, I'm just gonna admit that this is a lazy review. There's members of PEEPLE WATCHIN', POTTY MOUTH and PARASOL in this band. I think you can figure out pretty quickly if you're gonna be heading over to Puzzle Pieces in the next ten seconds to pick up your own copy of this tape. (P.S. you are) (Greg) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, puzzlepiecesrecords.bigcartel.com)

HAALS – *Castle Claremont* – A hopelessly cool-sounding band from Buffalo, HAALS have unfortunately given up the ghost, but left us with this epilogue. Gloomy, hollow, surf goth that would likely be hip if they weren't from Buffalo, driven by reverb drenched guitars and vocals that sound like they are cranked through a Leslie. The bass rumbles lazily underneath, like a shelf that whole rest of the band rattles on top of while the singer gets weird. More reigned in, but not unlike San Francisco's sorely under appreciated PHANTOM LIMBS. Spooky doesn't have to be pretentious. (Robert) (14-song cassette, lyrics not included, drugparty.org)

KING SEXY – *Live Like a Dog in Sexycolor* – I think this band is trying to sound like a smooth rock'n'roll/garage band, but they just sound like a more together, non-jokey version of the THROWN UPS to me. Maybe that's a vague reference, but members of MUDHONEY were in that band, so it's not *that* vague. This band isn't as falling apart as the THROWN UPS, but the singer goes between spirited and bored. There are songs about women, being sexy, more women and relationships. It's just bar rock to me. (Greg) (12-song cassette, lyrics not included, kingsexy.bandcamp.com)

THE LIGHT – *The Restless Tide* – On their second tape, Oakland's the LIGHT sounds entirely more focused and vicious than their last go around. Innovation has never been the strong suit of hardcore, but when it's done right and well by people who feel it in their bones, you can tell. The LIGHT plays straightforward punk that is somewhere between hardcore and D-beat; relentless. There's no wasted space in any song. Every song is just full-on, every step of the way. Every instrument, including the vocals, is completely raw and on the verge of

destruction. You can almost hear their singer, Ruby's vocal cords falling apart by the end of the tape. Excellent tape. Features members of DIEHARD, HUNTING PARTY, NO STATIK and SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS. (Greg) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included unfortunately, thelightlightlight.bandcamp.com)

LOW FANTASY – Full disclosure: I picked up this tape because it had *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* references on it and I'm a huge fan of that show. I can listen to and enjoy tapes of the most abysmal quality, but the (dumpstered?) tape this band sent was so muffled and unintelligible that I just listened on their Bandcamp page. The music is bedroom-pop/shoegaze-style that is swimming in reverb. It sounds like it may be a one-man project. Everything is so layered in fuzz and reverb that it's hard to tell what's going on underneath at times, but not in that fun way, like the SWIRLIES. It's more like in that way where your friend disappears for three months and then admits they were just working on music in their room and then they make you listen to their deeply personal songs while they stare straight into your eyes, awaiting your response. Did that sound like disrespect, because I didn't mean it that way…(Greg) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, lowfantasy1.bandcamp.com)

MACHINA MUERTA – The embodiment of ramshackle raw D-beat. A US cassette reissue of this Mexican stunner that brings absolutely nothing new to the genre, but their rehash is full of energy and desperation… and distortion. Made by punks who know exactly what they are trying to do, for punks who already know exactly what they want. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, $5ppd [$7 world], Black Mold, 3536 Haight Ave., Portland, OR 97227, blackmold.storeenvy.com)

MAGNETS – Sometimes, I get bad feelings about Brooklyn and their punk scene (those reasons are my own and convoluted), but MAGNETS makes me feel alright. They play straightforward, melodic punk that's influenced by the mid-'00s NYC punk scene (like Tompkins St. and BENT OUTTA SHAPE with less STONES influence) and a touch of Chattanooga-style region rock. You know how some bands are just better when no one loans them a guitar tuner or tells them to tighten shit up? This is that band. If they didn't have a drummer who plays like he's smashing a cop's face into the ground, they might be in trouble though. For now, they're sounding good and would probably sound better with a few beers in you. (Greg) (9-song? cassette, lyrics not included, magnetsbk.bandcamp.com)

MESS//AGE – *Moments Of Mayhem* – Energetic hardcore from Germany. It's raw bombastic D-beat shit and lumbering but melodic euro HC creeping into the thrash metal world, but they aren't there yet so they still have that edge. If MESS//AGE can maintain that balance, then this shit could get real good. (Robert) (15-song cassette, lyrics included, messagepunx@gmx.de, bomb-all.blogspot.de)

MODERN DELUSION – *Wasteland* – Ugh, this rules! MODERN DELUSION is from Croatia and they play synth-driven, super-tight, KBD-style punk. Every song is driving and urgent, somewhere between early DICKIES, DEVO and LOST SOUNDS. So many bands play this style and do it badly, but MODERN DELUSION is fucking killin' it. They cover CRIME. Eat shit. Get this. (Greg) (7-song tape, lyrics included, livinginadoomtown.blogspot.com)

MORPHIC LAPSE – *Mimesis* – Frighteningly fast technical grind. There's a DISCORDANCE AXIS cover and if it ain't a drum machine then the person sitting behind them tubs is an unholy skin destroyer. Sometimes I think stuff like this is as challenging to listen to as it is to create, well worth the effort on both ends though. (Robert) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, financial-ruin.com)

NAH – *Otheration* – I've had a few NAH tapes pass through my hands, and I've been sucked in by every one of them. Manic drums and sampled percussion, manufactured noise and sampled drones, the whole mess is a cacophony akin to CUT HANDS but way less controlled. NAH is prolific as hell, but I have not been disappointed thus far, so keep cranking out sound. (Robert) (15-track cassette, lyrics not included, nahstuff.bandcamp.com, www.protagonistmusic.com)

NEW CRIME – When this tape started, I was like "What the fuck is happening?" A couple of freaks were screaming over some random organ sounds and someone absentmindedly hitting some sheet metal or something. Then, it started to ease into some jarring, fucked up punk… the kind you might expect coming from freak punk contingents like DAWN OF HUMANS or the Lumpy Rex/Spotted Race label. Definitely straightforward and punk as fuck, but also led by a singer who sounds like he has a microphone stuffed into a glue bag that's tied to his fucking face. You probably already know if this is your new favorite band or not. (Greg) (5-song? cassette, scrawled nonsensical lyrics included, scaldedtongue.bigcartel.com)

PINK PILE – This is the first tape from these Oakland weird-dogs. They play lo-fi, minimalist post-punkish shit that is not afraid to let a nugget of melody slip through from time to time. Sometimes, there's an organ floating through the songs that add some extra depth to their jagged basement punk approach. The guitars meander between noisy and angular while different vocalists shout thought the din. I'm not sure I'm being clear here, but it's really good. Trust me. (Greg) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, PO Box 1196, Oakland, CA 94604, pinkpileindustries@gmail.com)

RASH TONGUE – Fist in the air D-beat hardcore, piercing guitars and vocals that land closer to KARP than DIS-anything (a welcome diversion, whether intentional or not). Nothing fancy, but the songs are killer and the lyrics confirm a determination suggested by the music. No complaints other than a muddy reproduction. (Robert) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, 6 Haskell St., Allston, MA 02134, jakebison@gmail.com)

RATHAUS – *Freddy Krueger Sweater/Early Child Development* – Distorted, jangly and messy garage shits with shrieking female vocals on the A-Side and spoken male rambling on the flip. These are some out there jams, bordering on psychedelic art punk (especially on the B-Side) but managing to hold the leash just tight enough to keep the dogs from running wild. (Robert) (2-song cassette, lyrics not included, rathausrathaus@gmail.com, brainplanrecords.blogspot.com)

SADIST –Now Boston is a town that I've never had much interest in. What do you get? Drunk Irish Catholic dudes. Drunk Irish cops. Drunk jocks. Not drunk jocks (SSD). The Red Sox? At least they have the FUs and AEROSMITH. This little cassette is dramatically changing my mind. All the shitty lo-fi charm of the HELLHAMMER demo where everything's tuned so low it cancels each other out. But this is not metal. Just dark and evil. Starts off with the sounds of a non-union factory in Hades straight into a gut punch of bass rumble plucked by Satan's claw. The last song reminds me a lot of ARCHAIC whom they would fit nicely with sharing a bill. I'm shitty at comparisons. The music stands on it's own. Playing a Black Mass at Cheers soon. (Rotten Ron) (?-song cassette, lyrics included, irrh.storenvy.com)

SCUMRISE – *Super Hits* – Nü metal disguised as punk, these Finns say they are doing this to have fun. So, good for them, and I hope they continue having fun and partying with their high energy blues-rock guitars and exaggerated vocal spitting wisdom like: *drink a bottle of whiskey and a couple of beers/have sex with a lady and smoke weed/hell yeah!* (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, scumrisemusic@gmail.com)

SEX SCHEME – *Thruster* – Deep, hollow and creepy. A mess akin to a bluesy musical interpretation of Bukowski, there are BIRTHDAY PARTY vibes but this shit is *way* fukkd sounding. Vocals are slurred and mumbled, and song titles include "Cocaine," "Gratification," "Amputee" and "Take Her Home" with lyrical content to match the off-putting subject matter. The recent *Dog Slut* EP is positively clean compared to *Thruster*, this actually makes me feel a little ugly inside. (Robert) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, sexscheme.bandcamp.com)

SLEW – Did I miss the memo about how hardcore bands are just supposed to use reverb

on their vocals all the time now? This band did not. Whatev's. SLEW comes from Pittsburgh and flies through five songs of straightforward, raging US hardcore. It's really good and done well, but a lot of it sounds like "The first idea is the best idea." On the fourth song, "Dum Fuk," the band really nails it with their best song and keeps it under a minute. They're not really breaking down the walls, but it's decent. (Greg) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, slew.bandcamp.com)

SOUR MILK – *Expired* – This appears to be a solo punk project by this guy Craig, and some of these songs were written as far back as 1996. Basic punk songs with fuzzy guitars and a not-distracting drum machine. His vocals sound a lot like Mike Ness to me, but I wouldn't compare this to SOCIAL D at all. The lyrics are of an anti-social ilk, and though there's nothing too exciting here, some of the songs are pretty good! (Matt) (15-song CD-R, some lyrics included, PO Box 27851/St. Louis, MO 63146-1351)

SPIRIT OF DANGER – *Malus Web* – The music is pretty basic mature punk (I'm talking the kind of music that was raised by '90s DIY and then graduated to the bars) but with plenty of hooks and screaming guitars. There are a couple of tracks that bring to mind smart assed SoCal punks (but also through an adult-who-hangs-out-in-bars filter), which is weird since they are from New York, but these are moments that shine. Vocals are an intriguing snarling feisty mess, and are without a doubt the highlight of the tape. It's dark, there's a…vibe…that I can't put a finger on. (Robert) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, spiritofdanger.bandcamp.com)

STRAIGHT CRIMES – *Western Medicine* – I guess this should've made it in last month's issue so you could read what some schlep (me) thinks of the demo after you read what some people (them) think of their own band. Sometimes I am slow, no biggie, this just means coverage extended over two issues, which STRAIGHT CRIMES should appreciate. I, on the other hand, appreciate their ultra-minimal stripped-down accidental post-punk. I say "accidental" because I don't think that is necessarily their goal, but basic stripped-down punk with earnest vocal shouts warbling alongside one bare guitar while drums plod determinedly onward? Instantly appealing. (Robert) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, striaghtcrimes.bandcamp.com)

STRANGER – Goth punk and death rock (or however this stuff gets classified) is obviously en vogue this year (I'm not complaining), which means that there's typically a glut of the stuff and it's harder for the genre's adherents to stand out. Boston's STRANGER accomplish that on the back of B, whose razor sharp vocals cut through mid-paced dark punk burners with spit and desperation. The songs that those vocals compliment are stellar on their own—driving drums, PENI-esque riffs and a creepy-crawly bass lifted not surprisingly from hardcore—but that voice puts the whole recording on edge. I realize that I threw out the hip descriptors in the first sentence, but these are just hardcore tunes cleverly (if thinly) masked, which is perhaps why they are so appealing. "Down Into It" is the standout jam here, but the whole tape is a stunner. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, wearestranger.bandcamp.com)

SURROGATES – A pop punk CD-R with no info besides a Tumblr address scribbled on the disc. Sigh. Throw all of the most overused chord progressions into the blender with the most obvious (and whiny) vocal melodies and emulsify. And though I know it's not "bad" for me, I can't help but gag a bit as I force it down. Think a more polished BROADWAYS. (Matt) (4-song CD-R, lyrics not included, surrogates315.tumblr.com)

SURVEILLANCE – *Stressed and Depressed* – A pretty inconsistent demo stylistically, but with some strong moments. It kicks off with a grungy-pop sound that reminds me of DINOSAUR JR., but then turns away toward something more indie noise pop. "Holy Unholy" is the climax—a perfect upbeat dirty pop song with an interesting arrangement. I'm still not convinced it's not a cover, but I wasn't able to find any evidence that it is. Though the style varies a bit, the thin drums and dirty guitar sounds stay consistent throughout the tape. Pretty cool stuff from Nova Scotia. (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, surveillance2015.bandcam.com)

SWEATERMEAT – So, SWEATERMEAT didn't win me over with their first song. The only instrument playing throughout the whole song was an alarm clock. The worst sound! The rest of the release is jokey minimalist pop music (with an extra fuzzy-sounding bass) about boobs, girls with hairy arms, pizza, hating everyone in the room (that's the whole song), dogs and parties. Mostly, there's a female singer, but sometimes a man jumps in. They're trying to sound like a fun party, but if I walked into this party, I'd run out the door and go anywhere else. (Greg) (14 song CD-R, lyrics not included, yokomolotov@gmail.com)

TRAITOR CRUCIFIX – *Marching Forward* – Howling, plodding, metallic, murky…really filthy-sounding down-tuned crust with tinges of that weird black metal meets UK punk thing that I can't really understand but do rather enjoy (I'm talking BONE AWL and the like). Vocals are beyond tough as nails—bordering on terrifying—and when they pick the pace up to a D-beat gallop, the result is fearsome. There is nothing even slightly subtle about this release. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, financial-ruin.com)

TRRASH – This fucking shit is a pure cacophonous mess. Mutated hardcore that sounds like everything falling apart for days. They have a singer who uses their voice like an instrument, screaming and moaning out words that may or may not exist. This shit is bass heavy, maniacal and totally fucked up. You are a freak. You will love this. Members of FREAK VIBE and NUDES. (Greg) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, psychedtodie@gmail.com)

UTAH JAZZ – The note says there are SKATE KORPSE punks (or at least one), and that makes total sense to my ears. Super laid-back shits with lazy sporadic vocals that give the recording either a "vibe" or a "charm," depending on what time of day I listen to it. If I say the songs are quirky, don't take it as an insult…it just means that these kids aren't afraid to present what are genuinely cool punk trax in a genuinely odd manner. Nice raw recording…upstate New York does not give a fukk about trends. (Robert) (?-song cassette, lyrics not included, B. Gaffney 593 Mt. Hope Ave., Rochester, NY 14620, mediaschlitz@gmail.com)

WILD ASSUMPTIONS – *Edge of My Shadow* – I feel like I've seen this band before, but I'm too busy getting lost in the tape to do the mental gymnastics required to determine if my memory is correct. It's (relatively) simple, and incredibly endearing melodic indie/punk with vocals that lilt instead of belt. The band (and specifically the vocals) reminds me of a subdued PRIMITIVES, which is a very, very good thing. (Robert) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, wildassumptions@gmail.com)

WOKLING – The first line of the first song goes "I wanna rip out your insides and feed you fucking period blood popsicles." So now that you know the level of anger we're dealing with here, WOKLING plays a type of ramshackle hardcore with distorted vocals that sometimes remind me of FYP, minus the playschool gimmicks. The energy and riffs are fairly high quality—the fourth song is excellent. It's one of those hardcore punk bands that sounds great, it just lacks the type of hooks that will make you play it over and over again. Some more band evolution and focus on vocal hooks will put this band up a notch. (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, Lagerville Records, 32 Battery St. Apt. 2, Providence, RI 02903)

ZAKARY SLAX – Check it out. This Canadian dude did a recording project of roc'n'roll / power-pop and it's not fuckin' bad at all! It's got some psych/stoner moments thrown in to make it weirder and more interesting. Some of those moments drag on a little too long for my tastes (I yawned at one point...really), but overall, this is some high quality shit here! His voice has a little bit of a Johnny Thunders / McDonald brothers (REDD KROSS) feel to it that doesn't really feel derivative or affected. Kinda natural. I'm into it. (Greg) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, zakaryslax@gmail.com)

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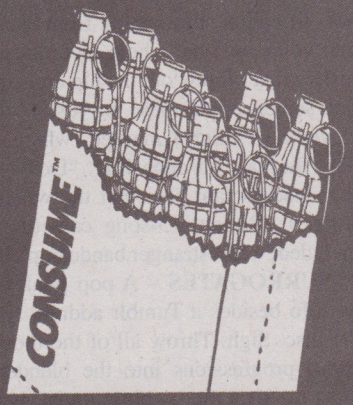

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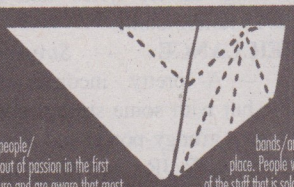

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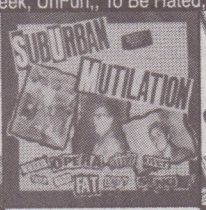

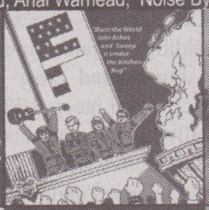
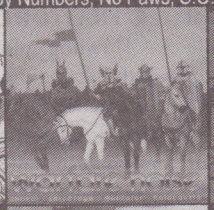
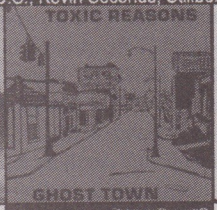

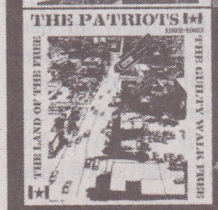

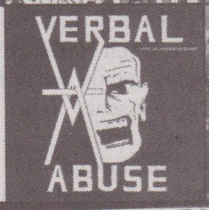

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(VX) Vanessa Asswipe
(MB) Mariam Bastani
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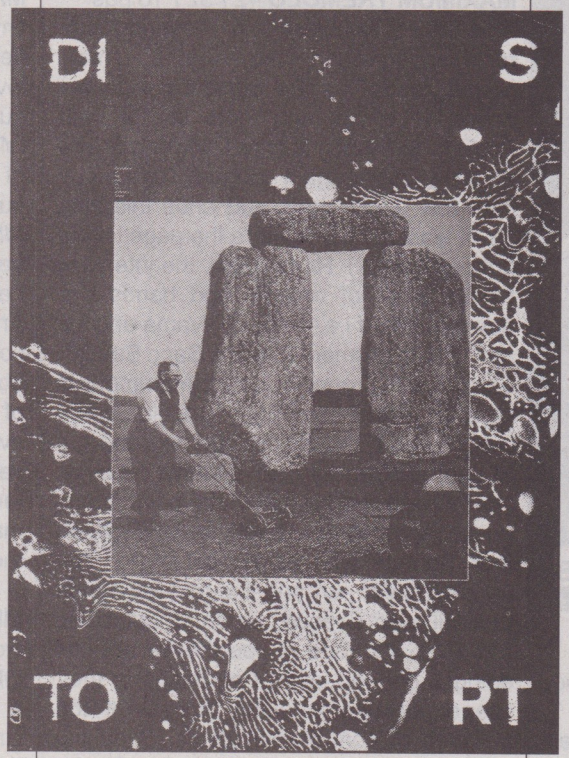
(DZ) Ryan Modee
(AP) Ari Perezdiez
(LA) Lydia Phelps
(MP) Max Power
(DV) Diana Vashti

ANIMALIA / $2 / 28 pgs
I think this is supposed to be like horror fiction. I'm not against people writing stories and trying to share them with other people. I think it's admirable. It takes a lot of ambition and follow through and confidence. That said this is pretty bad—pretty obvious plot lines and overly flowery language. Like, did he write this next to a thesaurus? Oh the horror of everyday life. Keep writing man. (EC)
hipkidsrecords.blogspot.com / hip.kid.record@gmail.com / 2020 N California Ave / Chicago, IL 60647

BORN DEAD #8 / $3 ppd / 22 pgs
This zine collects flyers for shows that the author has done in Winnipeg over the course of the last twenty years. There's one per page, with stories and other memories related to each one printed below (including one for a Dillinger Four show that ended up not happening). The flyer layouts are quite varied, as are the bands featured thereon, but most look very cut-and-paste '90s style, regardless of when they happened, though Mike is a talented flyer maker. A lot of the events, colorful or mundane, are recalled with a fairly dry writing style, and reads like it may have been written more with locals in mind, though I enjoyed learning about the scene history through Mike's eyes. I also like that the writing is quite level-headed, rather than being too glassy-eyed or bitter, though events that would warrant either feeling are certainly told. (DG)
c/o Mike Alexander / 757 Ashbury St / Winnipeg, MB R3G 3C8
alexander.michael@gmail.com

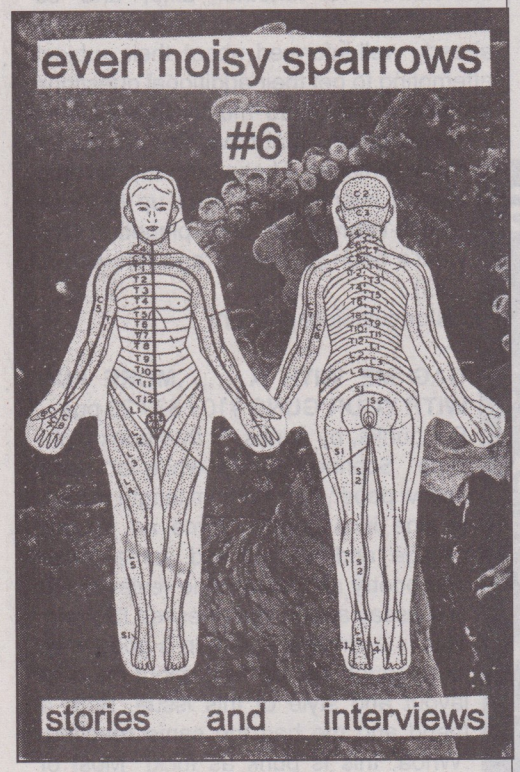
CRUCIAL CHANGES #9 / free / 12 pgs
Before I say anything else, I want to point out that the best part of this zine is that it includes a picture of Ryan from Carry On's industrial band, Youth Code, whose full-length is actually quite good. I'm not sure if they came to Omaha or the author saw them in LA, but this is essentially a photozine, with a short and forgettable Omaha scene report and a shockingly short interview with "heavy metal/grind" band Feeder/Gainer from Lincoln, NE, that is little more than promotional material. The photos are reproduced just a little too light for my liking, but they capture their subjects well, and have decent resolution. A few are clearly touring bands, but I have no idea which or if any are locals. (DG)
c/o Keith McGrath / 110 S. 49th St #410 / Omaha, NE 68132
crucialchangeshq@gmail.com



DISTORT #44 / $4 / 24 pgs
DX could write about almost anything, and I would at the very least pay attention, even if I didn't have a frame of reference for or agree with what was being written, which is precisely what has happened as he's veered away from only writing about music with which I am immediately familiar. This time around, he reflects on some of the brighter side of the Kinks, talks hallucinogens with Nathan of Gutter Gods and Dribble, interviews philosophers Jon Roffe and Ray Brassier, does a *follow-up* interview about fashion with Constant Mongrel, whom he had already interviewed for another zine, and so forth. The interviews read like someone already well-informed about their subject attempting to get their additional questions answered, and read mostly like esoteric conversations that have little regard for those outside. These are my favorite kind of interviews, and it's up to those whose interest has been piqued to take what's been presented and run with it. (DG)
distortcult.blogspot.com

GAG ME WITH A...: ...MORE FUN WITH YOUR GUNS #10 / $? / 20 pgs
For punks, by punks, in true punk high-style. Scanned on to white or neon yellow paper, this medium length mixed-lit zine is a dandy. Some art, mostly collage and all rad and some prose and poetry as well as zine reviews and one essay about, you guessed it, zines. This is a zinester's zine in a good way. Not enough can be said about the cool layout and style of this issue. Both a friend and me had the same reaction, "Whoa, this is punk as fuck!" Most of the contents look collaged by hand and while there is some pixilation, it does not seem to egregious to the point of sloppiness. I definitely recommend this one. Over its ten-issue lifespan to date over 159 contributors have helped make *Gag Me With A...* a sweet current zine that will make you feel like the '90s punks gave you a big ghostly creepy hug. (DV)
GagMeWithA@gmail.com

EARTH FIRST! Spring 2014 / $6.50 / 58 pgs
Direct action reports from around the US, including resistance to fracking, logging, tar-sands exploration, mountain top removal (mining) and others. There is a history of robot wars that reads like a round-up of the doomed tech future, such as a Duke researcher finding that recording motor cortex activity from one rat and turning it into an electric signal delivered via neural link to another rat allowed the second rat to complete a task the first rat had to learn. I think this issue is pretty well rounded since there's positive news mingling with the ultra depressing. Not to review a review, but there's a good one of a zine put out by CrimethInc on self-care, calling attention to this buzzword as an industry as well as a binary crutch between two options, workaholism and selfishness (when others have to pick up the slack.) There's also information on how to support political prisoners should you feel inclined. (JB)
PO Box 964 / Lake Worth, FL 33460



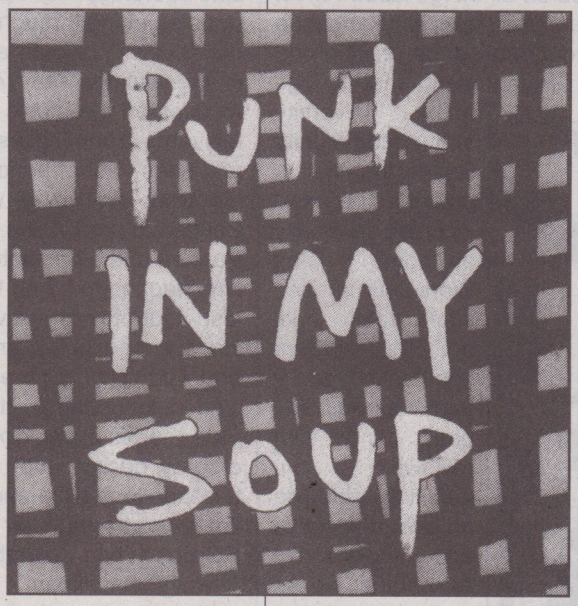
EVEN NOISY SPARROWS #6 / $3 ppd, free to prisoners / 42 pgs
I always like it when people interview their friends. In this case Ashley is in some bands and does a label, but the interview comes off as, "here's an interview with a badass." There's also one with Culebra who talks about being queer in a Cuban-American family, trying to balance the need to be surrounded by queers, but also still connect with Cuban culture, thus, connecting with Santeria: a religion often empowering to queers. I can get on that train. There is also a fictional story of a squat that houses a show space, and one about two kids who get bullied. Layout wise, it's really boring—just a bunch of words with no pictures whatsoever. The whole zine centers on transformative experiences and I would recommend it to people interested in queer culture and radical thinking. (JB)
Serafima Mintz / 527 NW 6th Place / Gainesville, FL 32601
serafima@ufl.edu

MAXIMUM TREMOLO #2 / $2 / 16 pgs
This is an excellent zine covering surf rock underground and history. I said "underground" as the biggest band they cover is La Luz and more so for their Profane Existence inspired "Making Surf a Fucking Threat Again" slogan. The La Luz interview oddly starts and ends this zine (or at least my copy where the page layout got outta wack). Regardless, the interview covers a lot of records and bands I've never heard of i.e.—Yuzo Kayama and his rad 1966 instrumental "Black Sand Beach". The talk with France's Les Agamemmonz is great as it asks them about the old Swede surf ("Sweurf"?) band the Spotniks and lots of neat stuff about their creative process. Next there's a short, but to the point Austin scene report complete with an *MRR*-styled look (though with bigger columns). The reviews cover surf and like-minded bands from all over: Greece, Japan, Brazil, USA, etc. Plus, it's good to see they're not just doing a generic love of all things in their scene, as they're plenty critical of too polished or commercial bands. Speaking of, the "surf down" editorial deals with the clichés of this scene (where have I hear that before?). Later there's a column in support of their "surf-punk as fuck" slogan which underscores these ideas: "Start a band and tell all the dad-rock surf bands that your band is younger, faster, better and more energetic than they are." On top of that, they reviewed France's the Chemist and the Acevities—an anarcho-surf band! Also, there's an excellent US surf-rock history including the Off-Beats from Oakland who gave way to a variety of East Bay garage/beat bands. Lest I forget the cool interview with ex-Night Bird, Mike Hunchback who's now running the Brooklyn record store Co-Op 87. (JD)
PO Box 467 / Buffalo, NY 14226 / maximumtremolo@gmail.com

MEND MY DRESS #12 : POLAND / $2 US, $3 world, no trade / 16 pgs
It doesn't seem like *MMD* has been around for too long and I'm surprised to see Neely's already at her twelfth issue. *Poland* centers around a love story between the narrator and some guy that lives far away. It's a quick tribute full of dreamy references to the newness of crushing and the pain, but redeeming qualities of living far away from someone. *MMD* has always had this like unfinished aesthetic of femininity (nay, girlness?) that I always feel a little uncomfortable around. And like maybe that's the point. It does contrast nicely with these glimpses of like oozing nasty realities relating to the pain of growing up girl. Like I think it's cool and even at the moment, albeit only in certain venues, a little ubiquitous. As seen on tumblr, bunny rogers videos, and rookie magazine. (EC)
mendmydress@gmail.com

MENTAL BEAT #1 / 5 euros EU, 7 euros world, trade / 36 pgs
OK, for a first issue, this guy is already a pro! A beautifully designed rock'n'roll zine from Italy. Black, white and blue are the shades that colour these 36 pages, and the layout is smart with an old school typography retro arrangement, but with a gritty punk edge, looking like it could have swaggered out of the late '70s-early '80s rapture of Art School Punk Expressionism (totally just made that up). Featuring

pieces in Italian and English, art director Alessandro Cavallini has assembled a most attractive and engaging first issue: (in English) interviews with Peter Zaremba of the Fleshtones and Kris Needs of UK's renowned *ZigZag* magazine, plus r'n'r, power pop and punk'n'roll record reviews, and (in Italian) longer form articles on NY's Shelter (!), UK mavericks Anti-Pasti and, if I got it right, an obsessive Ramones flyer collector. However, the two pieces that tickled my fancy the most were the Johnny Thunders Crossword Puzzle, followed by a New York Dolls piece written — and eye-catchingly laid out — by the Moz himself some time long ago. Pick this up if you're into printing, rock'n'roll/ protopunk or something that looks top notch, pick this up. (LA)
miguelbasetta@tiscali.it



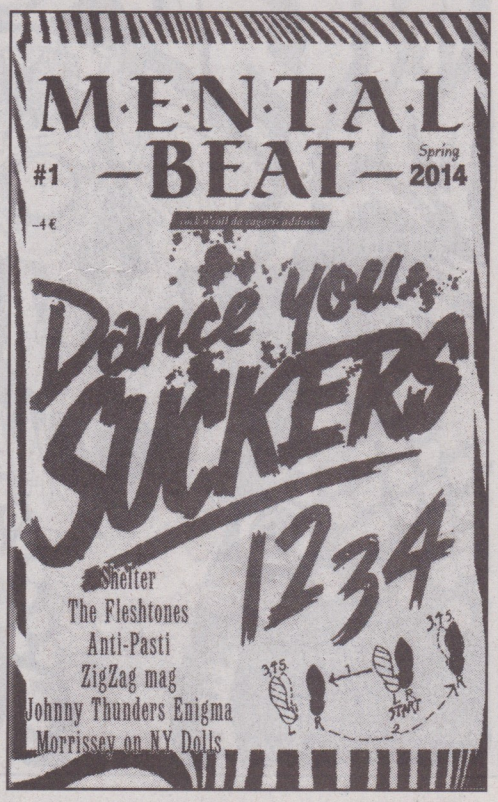
POSITIVE CREED #7 / $? / 24 pgs
This just feels weird—really glossy black and white print on pretty nice stock. It's like they used a super nice full color printer to print B&W on wedding invitation paper. Now for the content…an unfollowable rant page, zine reviews, '80s video game reviews, interviews with the Vibrators and Cockney Rejects, a rant on boycotting Tesco and a rundown of the authors time at a pretty boring music festival… Honestly, I was more stoked that Harold Lloyd adorns the cover, and there's a screenshot of my favorite Wilder/Pryor movie. (DZ)
PO Box 777 / EX1 9TU / Exeter, England

PUNK IN MY SOUP #1/ $3.75 ppd / 32 pgs
This mostly consists of music reviews with one zine review and a brief intro statement. The reviews are really insightful and you get a good sense of the author's personality and eccentricities throughout this zine. The reviews cover a wide range of musical styling's from current NYHC act Creep to post punk acts like No Sir, I Won't and post rock bands I'm not to familiar with, but will check out thanks to this zine. The problem with the first issue of an all review zine is that you can't really compare your tastes to the reviewers, but everything is well written so even if you don't agree with the musical tastes, read it anyway. I also thought the yellow paper and blue-ish green ink would kill my eyes while reading it, but it wasn't really a problem and the zine looks sick. There is a segment at the end where the zine goes into why they didn't review a band's release because of possible sketchy Nazi content, but in explaining why they weren't reviewing it they basically reviewed the whole thing. Sometimes silence says a lot more than lengthy explanations. Anyway I'm excited to read some more reviews from future editions of this zine. (KC)
Alex / 136 Spencer Place / Leeds / L574DX, UK / micahjensen@yahoo.com

RAZORCAKE #80 / $4 / 112 pgs
I love *Razorcake* and I was stoked to see the latest issue in my mailbox this month. I loved all of the comics in this issue. Ben Snakepit's comic comparing beer and punk music (and explaining why you should care about the quality of both) was brilliant, and Lucky Nakazawa's comic about a friend's adventure with semen-soaked kleenex and locker rooms cracked me up. The articles and overall quality of writing in this issue were also on point. I especially enjoyed Jim Ruland's "Virginia Is for Haters" piece and the Nardwuar vs. the Sonics interview. Nardwuar is a piece of work and his irreverent style of interviewing is great — it doesn't translate so well on print, in my opinion, but the interview has some fun anecdotes that were fun to read. Overall, a solid issue that is worth checking out. (SF)
www.razorcake.org

SLINGSHOT # 116 / free / 16 pgs
Slingshot is a long standing (since 1988!) collectively run, once per season, radical political newspaper and it's fuckin' free! This issue has articles covering raising the minimum wage, LGBT (and more!) identity politics, immigrant hunger strikes, SF gentrification, squatting, book and zine reviews, and honestly, just tons more. (DZ)
PO Box 3051 / Berkeley, CA 94703 / slingshot.tao.ca / twitter@slingshotnews

SOMETHING FOR NOTHING #69 / 2 stamps, trade / 28 pgs
Another flawless issue of *Something for Nothing*. Lots of record and zine reviews, and, as always, non-alcoholic beverage reviews. I love how this person has no shame in reviewing all-natural sodas and aloe vera juice from the local health food store. I always find out about great punk bands and records from the past and present and there's a lot of content even though there are so few pages. Recommended, because it's good. (VX)
516 Third St. N.E. / Massilon, OH 44646



STICKS AND STONES / $? / 88 pgs
Basically someone printed out their tumblr and then turned it into a zine. There are lots of pictures and lots of poems and quotes in Greek and English. Just like tumblr, this zine is easy to zip through in no time, but feels less empty because it's offline. If you like a lot of visuals, random sayings and collages, you'd like this. (VX)
diydanae2@gmail.com / sticksnstoners.tumblr.com

STITCHES IN MY HEAD #6 / $? / 10 pgs
Looks like cool is the new rule these days,

and this sixth edition of *Stitches in my Head* is falls in line. The cover by Sam McKenzie's is striking and the layout inside is punk cut'n'paste, with starkly contrasted pics from punk shows dotted throughout. This issue features interviews with Clevo HC band Lucha Eterna, Pittsburgh's raw noise punx Eel, Melbourne's metallic crusties

Extinct Exist; plus a neat mini special on Australian rock'n'roll radio (interviews with teenage Heat on RRR FM, and Club it to Death on PRB FM), an enlightening interview with the editor of Melbourne feminist film zine *Filmme Fatales*, and a discussion with NY-crazed OZ HC label Cool Death Records. Christina seems to have started her own label too, Blow Blood Records, so check all these projects out if you wanna know what's happening (quotes optional) Down Under. (LA)
stitchesinmyheadfanzine@gmail.com / stitchesinmyhead.blogspot.com

THE STUDENT INSURGENT Vol. 25 Issue 3 / free / 22 pgs
The *Student Insurgent* is a zine based out of the University of Oregon in Eugene. This issue is focused on all things labor. I must say the *Student Insurgent* is something that, as a student, makes me really proud to see. The engagement that brings both university and community issues together is present. The issue included a really awesome "Sex Work Journal" and some really cool art. The *Insurgent* does not shy away from the traditional book and film reviews, but definitely puts the articles of students and community as central pieces that make up the *Insurgent*. Issues of the *Insurgent* are available through a $15 subscription, which seems awesome because you can support the awesome students that are doing this type of work. I love seeing publications like the *Insurgent* that attempt to bridge community and student voices in social justice efforts. The "Labor" issue definitely got it right by addressing some of the key concepts of labor rights. Obviously, while looking through the issue I caught myself saying, "Hey! It would be cool if they mentioned this!" However, as we all know, publications that are open for submission (such as this one) are as good as the readers make them! The *Insurgent* does take submissions, so I would definitely consider getting your voice on this! (OG)
EMU Suite One, University of Oregon/ Eugene OR, 97403-128
studeninsurgent@gmail.com

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #124 / $2, trade / 38 pgs
Wow, issue 124 of this punk mag and it looks like *this*? I don't see any offers of a zine anthology in this person's future. I had trouble getting through this because of the non-existent layouts and lack of passion in the writing. *The Trouble With Normal* focuses on the music scene in Columbia, Missouri. Boone goes to a lot of shows and sees a lot of bands that pass through his town and then writes about them. Bands featured in this issue are Bleached, Pangea and a brief interview with Rubrics, who happen to be on the cover. There are also a lot of record reviews, which are the zines strong point, and two rants at the end. I don't know if the editor cares that his zine looks boring (normal?), but I do! Give us a sharpie drawn border or even a black or gray background, something to make this zine look alive and interesting, 'cause I'm falling asleep over here. (VX)
PO Box 1444 / Columbia, MO 65205-1444 / ttwn@hotmail.com

TOINEN VAIHTOEHTO #249-250 / contact for price / 64 pgs / Finnish
A double issue seems appropriate to celebrate the 250th (!) *Toinen Vaihtoehto*. Just a few pages and the cover are devoted to reprints, perhaps from issue 1? In the rest there are plenty of reviews—zines, music, film and shows, including some festivals and tour reports. Interviewed are Finland's Remissions, Buffalo, NY, USA's Gas Chamber and another one where I couldn't tell what was going on. There are six or so pages of writing from contributors, including a list of 40+ punk history books. The photos, though small, reproduced very well, and there are a lot of good ones..We look forward to the next 250! (JM)
PI 1 / 65200 Vaasa / Finland

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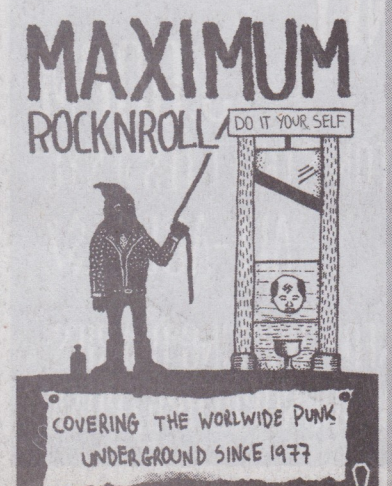

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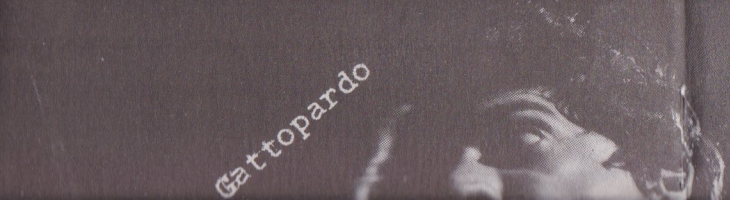
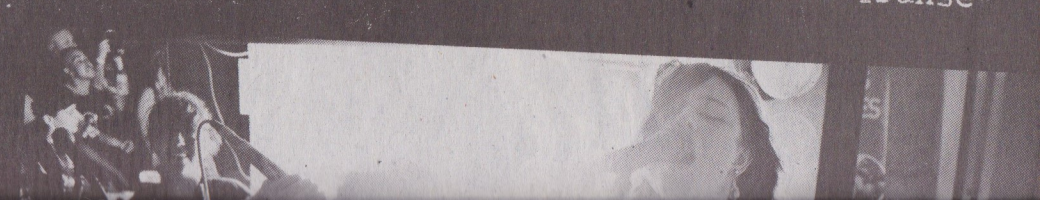
email mrr@maximumrocknroll.com for an application...

Gattopardo

Rakt

Photos by Mateus Mondini

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